

“Merthyr Express” 11 November, 1864

Opening of the Vochriw Schoolroom as a Place of Public Worship The Chancel attached to the schoolroom at Vochriw in the parish of Gelligaer, was opened for public worship on All Saints Day at 3 o'clock when litany was sung in Welsh by the Rev. J. Rosser, curate of Rhymney, and the sermon was preached by the Rev. Rees Price, rector of Llanvirinach. The chancel, which was occupied by the choir, is separated from the schoolroom and will be closed during weekdays by low doors and a curtain. It is very suitably fitted up with an altar table etc. raised on steps, and the floor is tastefully inlaid with tessellated pavement. The seats are temporary, it being proposed to place stalls as soon as a sufficiency of funds can be collected. A very large congregation was gathered together, and a great many of the clergy from the immediate neighbourhood was present, amongst whom we noticed the Rev. J. Griffiths, rector of Merthyr; Davies & Rowlands, Dowlais; Green, Pentrebach; Thomas, Lewis and Dr. Jones, Pontlottyn; Rogers, Rhymney; and Rev. G.C.F. Harries, Rector of Gellygaer, to whose writing exertions the erection of the building is due.

“Merthyr Express” 9 December, 1864

A Man Cut to Pieces Last Saturday afternoon at about four o'clock, a mason, Thomas Jones, in the employ of the Dowlais Iron Company, was returning from his work when he attempted to jump on a train of trucks at Vochriw. He missed his hold, fell under the trucks and was cut to pieces, his body being dreadfully mutilated. At the inquest, a verdict of “Accidental Death” was returned

Smallpox, Typhus and Scarlet Fever Smallpox is raging in Aberdare from the upper part of the town as far as Mountain Ash, and it was stated to the magistrate at the Aberdare Police Court last Tuesday, that in some houses three of four people had been attacked. Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and Dowlais are suffering from the same disease, and in those places it is on the increase. Typhus disease, the companion of bad drainage, and scarlet fever, have increased the already excessive mortality at Merthyr, and last Monday, the road to the Merthyr Cemetery at Cefn was lined with a complete procession of funerals. Neglect of vaccination, bad drainage, and want of cleanliness in the mining population, have had these disastrous effects.... The Vaccination Act is now being enforced by the authorities who so long neglected its use, and till the effect of the great and expensive drainage scheme opens up brighter prospects for Merthyr, cleanliness and lime washing should be urged on the population by those with influence.

“Merthyr Express” 10 March, 1865

Progress of the Age: Pantywaun School We are glad in being able to record the establishment of another Government school in the vicinity. We allude to Pantywaun, a small scattered mining district on the Rhymney mountain, between Rhymney and Dowlais, the inhabitants of which are chiefly employed by the Dowlais Iron Company. This has been erected entirely through the efforts of the Rev. G.C.F. Harris, Rector of Gellygaer, who has caused a very commodious school room to be erected, and has succeeded in providing funds for the support of a certificated teacher.

Public Thoroughfare from Pontlottyn to Tir Phil What has been sought for a long time, and talked of for the same period, is now about becoming a reality, for we see unmistakable proofs of their being granted and carried out. Numbers of workmen have just begun operations in making a roadway between these two thriving places.

“Merthyr Express” 17 March, 1865

Editorial: Penny Readings A month ago a few gentlemen introduced to the Merthyr public, without any ostentation or flourish of trumpets, but with an outward show as humble as the subject which they took in hand, Penny Readings. A great deal had been said of Penny Readings in other towns, every where around us they were starting into life, and why should they not have an existence in Merthyr also? Our Library Readings met with the hearty approval of the upper strata of local society, but they excluded the great mass of the working people from participating in the enjoyment which they gave, for the reason that only members of the library and their friends were allowed to attend, and from a still more potent cause, that they occurred on a night unsuited to the conveniences of the working people. Why, then should they not have an evening of their own to spend at these pleasant entertainments? There was nothing to prevent them enjoying themselves for a couple of hours in the same rational ways as their superiors in life, beyond the absence of a room and the lack of readers and singers. Fortunately, these wants were soon supplied, and the Committee after securing the Temperance Hall on Saturday evenings lost no time in introducing their protégé to the public of Merthyr. A better thing could not have happened, for a place where healthy amusement and re-creative intelligence could be obtained at a cheap rate has long been a crying want in Merthyr – something to entice the crowds of young men and women from their Saturday evening street parades, and what is worse, spending precious hours and hard-earned shillings in low pot houses, to their moral and physical degradation and ruin. Any person on standing about the Market Square for the first time during the noisy hours of a Saturday night, would exclaim with wonderment, “What on earth can all these people that are walking to and fro find here to entertain them?” Simply nothing. After six days’ heavy toil, they leave work at an early hour on Saturdays, they go home and change their habiliments, and then sally forth with a few shillings or pence in their pockets in search of something the innate craving for amusement and entertainment. They tramp the High-street to and fro, for the High-street in Merthyr is the great artery through which its stream of life is ever flowing, and by and by having failed to find anything to attract their attention and interest them there, they repair to the beer-houses as a last resource, and there, yielding to the insinuating strains of a harp, or decoyed by the lively airs of a fiddle and the animation of the dance, they spend their time and money, and consider themselves fortunate if in reeling homeward they escape the argus-eyed policeman. Those who have resided long in Merthyr know that this is not by any means an overdrawn picture, and various remedies have been applied for the cure and extinction of the evil. Twelve months ago a series of cheap concerts were given, at which ladies and gentlemen of considerable talent performed, and the working classes showed their appreciation of these concerts by attending in large numbers every night. Nobody can doubt for a moment that a vast amount of good was accomplished by these entertainments, and it has often been wondered why nothing of the sort was set on foot in the early part of the winter that is just leaving us. Towards its close the Penny Readings came; but, to use an old adage, better late than never. And the result has proved how true this is. On the first evening not quite a hundred and fifty people were present; on the second night these were more than doubled, and so each succeeding entertainment has drawn together a larger audience than its immediate predecessor. Last Saturday evening the body of the hall was crowded, and the gallery also was nearly filled, showing that the Readings were gaining favour with the people every week. The rapidity with which they have spread, and the cordial support which they have invariably received from the upper classes, demonstrate most satisfactorily their useful character; and every well wisher

of his country will say God speed to this or any other movement whose object is the improvement of our working classes. In Merthyr our worthy stipendiary magistrate when he became acquainted of the fact that they had started, recognized their importance at once and presided over the second meeting, at which he read in his turn like the rest. Following his example, other leading gentlemen in the town have taken the chair at these meetings, and thus imparted to them a character which places their respectability at once above suspicion. We hope to see the era thus successfully inaugurated long continue, for we are persuaded that simple as Penny Readings may at first thought appear to be, they are a means by which a great social and moral revolution may be accomplished with the most beneficent consequences to the sons and daughters of labour.

“Merthyr Express” 31 March, 1865

Pantywaun School We are glad to observe that the school has been so far advanced and completed, that it is announced to be opened on Monday next, 3rd April, 1865. The mistress selected for the very large number of candidates is Miss Tow of Helstone, Cornwall.

“Merthyr Express” 21 April, 1865

The Gellygaer Charities: Schools Inspections The Rev. J. Stammers, Chaplain to the Gellygaer Charities, inspected, officially, the Pontlottyn and Vochriw Schools on Friday last, 14 April 1865. The result of the examination is not yet known, but we think the reverend gentleman was highly satisfied with the progress made during the short time these establishments have been in operation. Both Mr. Porter and Mr. Jones (Head Teacher, Vochriw National School) are well spoken of.

“Merthyr Express” 12 May, 1865

Dreadful Explosion: Firedamp at Vochriw Colliery: Fourteen Men and Boys Injured

The old enemy of the colliers has once more come upon them with a rush, and the dreadful scene, unhappily so familiar to many of us, has been re-enacted during the past week in this locality. On Wednesday morning last, 10th May 1865, an explosion took place at the New Pit at Vochriw, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company. The explosion took place in the stall of James Jones. This is a new colliery and one of the deepest in the district. Happily, it was not long before the alarm of the workmen and their families was quieted. Fourteen men and boys were injured. Some of the poor fellows were burnt in the most shocking manner and had to be carried to their homes on planks. Others, who were not so badly burned, were able to walk to their homes. The following are the names of the persons injured: James Jones (aged 40), of D. Evans' House, Pantywaun; Rees Howells, (14), 3 Church Street; Evan Evans, (11), 234 Penyardarren Rd.; John Davies, (18), 222 Penyardarren Rd.; William Thomas, (11), 13 High St. Dowlais; Thomas Thomas (21), 15 Darren St. Dowlais; John Davies, (16), 9 Elizabeth St.; John Davies, (16), 50 Castle St.; Evan Davies, (20), 50 Castle St.; John Hughes, (15), 32 Pond St.; Daniel Jones, (20), Tyla Dowlais; Evan Evans, (49), 234 Penyardarren Rd.; Morgan Williams, (41), Nursery Row Rhymney; Henry Davies, (34), Vochrhiw. The damage done to the working was slight and would be easily repaired.

“Merthyr Express” 26 May, 1865

The Late Explosion at Vochriw Since our last issue one of the victims of the explosion in the Vochrhiw new pit, John Hughes, 15 years of age, has died, and an inquest on the body was opened on Monday by the coroner, George Overton, Esq. Two or three witnesses were examined, but they gave no evidence of interest. Deceased, it will be remembered, was the boy who worked with James Jones, whose lamp exploded the gas. The inquiry was adjourned for a month.

Fatal Accident on the Cwmbargoed Railway On Tuesday afternoon, an accident occurred on the Cwmbargoed line, an old man, Evan Davies (60 years of age) being killed. Deceased was riding on one of the trucks of a coal train, when his foot slipped, and he fell across the rail while the train was in motion. The latter part of the train passed over him, cut off one of his feet, and so badly crushed his chest that he died shortly afterwards. An inquest was held, and a verdict of "Accidental Death" was returned.

Another Fire Damp Explosion An explosion of fire damp took place on Tuesday afternoon in the 4ft pit at Pantywaun, belonging to the Dowlais Iron Company, by which three persons were slightly burned, one man and two boys. It appears that before the explosion there had been a fall of coal from the roof, in consequence of which a considerable quantity of gas was liberated from the fissures, and the men working with naked lights, unaware of its presence, caused it to suddenly explode. There was little damage done to the workings. The names of the parties injured are David Edwards, 31, collier, 25, North-street, Dowlais, who was burnt slightly about the face, John Lumley, 14, Red lion Inn, and Evan Davies, aged 16, of Well-street, Dowlais.

"Merthyr Express" 2 June, 1865

Another Explosion at Dowlais & Death of Two Persons The Dowlais Company's Pits seem to be fatally prolific with firedamp explosions just now. The great accident at Vochriw was followed by a lighter one by which four men were injured, and now this week, there has been a third disaster more fatal than either of the others. On Monday afternoon about five o'clock, an explosion of firedamp occurred in the 4ft vein of Buxton's Pit. John Evans, haulier, 28 years of age, and Thomas Hill, 12 years of age, were both slightly burned. Unhappily, before they could get away, the after damp, the pernicious product of the explosion came upon them, and they were killed by suffocation, being dead before the workmen could get to them. Every precaution was taken to prevent a mishap, and on the morning of the accident, every place in the pit was reported as being free of gas. On Wednesday, an inquest was opened on the bodies, but no evidence was taken, and the inquest was adjourned to the 15th inst.

"Merthyr Express" 9 June, 1865

Buxton's Pit Explosion Another of the men, Evan Evans, from Buxton's Pit explosion died on Wednesday.

"Merthyr Express" 16 June, 1865

Opening of the Newport Extension of the Brecon and Merthyr Railway The railway was opened on Wednesday morning as far as Hengoed, where it passes under the Great Western Railway line from Swansea to Merthyr, and the first passenger train left Dock-street Station, Newport, at 9.20a.m. by means of this railway, the opening of which has been so long looked forward to. Newport is now placed within easy and direct communication with the Rhymney Valley, which has been practically closed up to this time. The undertaking is likely to prove of utmost importance to the trade of Newport and district. The other portion of the line between Hengoed and Pant Station is expected to be opened shortly, and trains will then run through between Brecon and Newport. Also, the opening of the Sirhowy Railway from Tredegar to Newport will take place on Monday, 19th June.

"Merthyr Express" 23 June, 1865

Colliery Explosion Another dreadful explosion of firedamp has taken place at the New Bedwellty Pit below New Tredegar. 27 persons were killed.

“Merthyr Express” 14 July, 1865

Vochriw School Examined The Rev. J. Stammers, examiner to the Gellygaer Charities, examined Vochriw School last Friday.

Omnibus Service An omnibus service from Rhymney to Tredegar has commenced.

“Merthyr Express” 11 August, 1865

A Man Killed at the Vochriw Pit On Thursday last week, an accident occurred at the Vochriw Pit to a workman named William Morris, 32 years of age, a haulier, resulting in his death. On Thursday, his horse tackling had got out of order, and he was crossing the bottom of the shaft to go to the stable for fresh harness when the cage descended, and before he could get out of the way came upon him. He was crushed to the ground, and when extricated by his fellow workmen, he said he had broken his thigh and pelvis, which was found to be correct when he was taken home and examined by the surgeon of the works. He died on Saturday. Deceased did not blame anybody, and said that the cage was being lowered at its usual rate. An inquest was held on the body at the Greyhound Inn, and a verdict of “Accidental Death” was returned.

“Merthyr Express” 2 September, 1865

Deri School If the establishment of schools is any criterion of the social and intellectual progress of the community, then the strides made in this locality have been exceptionally great. The start of no less than half a dozen elementary schools has been referred to in these columns in recent times, and now we add another to the list. The establishment of the school at Deri has been largely due to the efforts of the Rev. G.C.F. Harris, Rector of Gellygaer. Temporary buildings will be used until the new school is completed. A certificated teacher is to be employed. The foundation stone of the new building was laid last week by Rev. Harris.

“Merthyr Express” 9 September, 1865

Pugilistic One of the unhopeful signs of our times - a pugilistic encounter - took place on Vochriw mountain on Monday evening last. Being an improper affair, they managed for some time to elude our vigilant constabulary. We have no doubts the belligerents (whose names are not worth recording) will hear more of this from another quarter.

“Merthyr Express” 30 September, 1865

A Man Crushed to Death at Vochriw We have another deplorable accident to record. A flueman, aged 55, John Lewis, who worked at the Vochriw colliery, was killed shortly after coming up from the pit. It is pretty well known that the colliers working at Vochriw and living in Dowlais, generally ride to and fro on the engines and coal trains. On Saturday, about 5.30pm, the train had just started, and deceased tried to get on to the engine as it passed. He fell and was run over by the tender. His injuries were so great, he died on the spot.

“Merthyr Express” 14 October 1865

Vochriw Independent Chapel A tea party was held here on Monday last, and received very good support. Several local ministers addressed the assembly. The proceeds of the evening are intended for the erection of a new Independent Chapel for this increasing neighbourhood.

“Merthyr Express” 21 October, 1865

Vochriw Thanksgiving Service The Rev. H. Lewis, Pontlottyn intoned and the Rev. Rowlands, Merthyr, preached the sermon. A collection was made for the National Society. Harvest Services took place at Pantywaun on the 12th inst. Rev. L. Price, Cyfarthfa, preached.

“Merthyr Express” 4 November, 1865

Explosion of Firedamp at Vochriw Colliery An explosion of firedamp occurred at Vochriw No. 2 Pit on Monday morning last, by which two men were severely injured. The names of the injured men are Rees Morgan, aged 50, a repairer, and living at Vochriw, and George Evans, aged 23, a haulier, of Penydarren. Both men were severely burned about the face, hands and arms. It would appear that Rees Morgan went into the pit at 12 o'clock on Sunday night to put up some timber. When he came to the heading in which he had to work, he found the fire mark which must have been there since Saturday. He was within seven or eight yards of the signal, when the gas, which had extended further down the heading, came into contact with the naked light which he carried, and exploded, causing the injuries described. Both men were at once taken out of the pit and taken to their homes, where their wounds were attended to. They are now progressing favourably. There was not much injury done to the pit.

“Merthyr Express” 9 December 1865

The Vochriw Our friends here have determined upon trying a course of Penny Readings, and without much a-do, inaugurated the series. They deserve to be successful, and we trust that the many celebrities here will occasionally lend them a helping hand. The proceedings were nearly entirely in Welsh. The attendance and success of the first “essay” was very encouraging.

Vochriw Penny Readings The first of a series of Penny Readings was held at the National School, on Thursday week. This proved a decided success. The Rev. T. L. Davies presided as chairman, and after a short and appropriate address, the Misses Edwards and Thomas, and Messrs. Thomas and Williams sang “Llwyn On” and “Ar hyd y nos,” followed by a reading in English, by the Rev. H. Lewis. Mr. W. Richards sang “Rhyn Mind,” after which the chairman read a Welsh dialogue, entitled “Morgan a Shan,” which kept the audience in convulsions of laughter. Mr. J. W. Thomas and party then sang “Gwenith Gwin,” which was highly appreciated by the audience; Mr. Jones followed with a reading “The Gypsy in the thorn bush.” Mr. J. W. Thomas, who was in capital voice, then sang “Ellen Bayne,” followed by Miss Thomas singing “O peidwch a dweid wrth fy nghariad,” and a duet by the Misses Edwards and Thomas, “Goddess Diana,” all of which were vociferously encored. Master D. Evans then recited “The little sweep,” followed by a duet by the Misses Edwards and Thomas, and a trio “Farmer’s girls,” by the Misses Edwards and Thomas and Mr. J. W. Thomas, which was loudly encored, the choruses being taken up by the audience. The National Anthem was then sung, and the audience dispersed highly pleased with the evening’s entertainment. Mr. T. Jones accompanied the singing on the harmonium. Great credit is due to the Rev. T. L. Davies and Mr. T. Jones for their combined exertions in forming the readings; also to Mr. J. W. Thomas who conducted the singing, and to the two young ladies, the Misses Edwards and Thomas, for their able assistance rendered in the musical part of the programme.

Quarterly Meeting of the Ivorites The Ivorites of this district held their quarterly meeting at the Tredegar Arms, Fleur-de-lis, on Monday last, when delegates from the different lodges assembled in the long room of the above house, D.P. Edward Davies in the chair, the vice being filled by P.D.P. Henry Williams, both of whom ably discharged their duties. After finishing the monetary business of the day, the meeting adjourned to partake of an excellent dinner prepared by mine host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Evans, who deserve great praise for their cordial reception and general kindness to the delegates. We find that this order is increasing in the district by continual accession to their numbers; there was an application also for the opening of

a new lodge at the Mount Pleasant Inn, Vochriw, which is to be called the "Flower of the Mountain." The new lodge is to be opened on the 1st January, 1866. The usual vote of thanks being given, the meeting terminated, and all the brothers seemed delighted with the prospects of the order in general, and the success of the district in particular.

Killed on the Railway Near Vochriw On Monday night sometime after dark, and while the wind was blowing hard and the rain was falling fast, a man named Jenkin Jenkins proceeded from his work to his home at the Deri huts, along the Brecon and Merthyr Railway line. The wind was blowing against him. An engine and trucks were coming along the line in the same direction, and before Jenkins was aware of his danger, the train was upon him, passed over him, and killed him on the spot.

"Merthyr Express" 16 December, 1865

Vochriw Readings Another reading came off here last Thursday evening, and in no way was inferior to its predecessor. The Rev. H. Lewis made a very able chairman. The room was crowded to excess. Mr. Jones presided at the harmonium.

"Merthyr Express" 26 February, 1866

Opening of Cwmysgwyddgwyn Chapel School The School Chapel in this beautiful little valley was opened on Friday last, 16th February. The School has a very high pitched roof and was built by Messrs. Price & Jones. It stands on the side of the hill close to Darren Station. Dinner was served at the Horse and Greyhound & the Bailey Arms. Present were the Rector of Gellygaer, Master Harries, Miss Watson, Rev. A. Stammers, Pengam, the Misses Johnson, Rhymney, Rev. E. Leigh, Tredegar, Rev. H. Lewis, Pontllytyn, Rev. W. Davies, Vochriw. Rev. E. Leigh preached in Welsh. At the evening service, the Rev. H. Hopkins, Beaufort, preached in Welsh.

"Merthyr Express" 31 March, 1866

Scholastic News The Rev. A. Stammers has been making his tour of inspection of the National Schools connected with the Gellygaer parish. All are reported to be in good condition. The Pantywaun School under Miss Tolls is highly recommended.

Penny Readings at Pantywaun Following in the wake of their neighbours, the villagers of this thriving neighbourhood inaugurated their Penny Reading season on Tuesday last. Every seat was taken at the National School and many were standing. The readings were a triumphant success. Rev. Goyne, Home Missioner, who organized the readings, was chairman.

"Merthyr Express" 21 April, 1866

Explosion of Firedamp A slight explosion of firedamp occurred at Vochriw No. 1 Pit on Monday last, by which a collier, John Davies, was slightly burned.

Brecon and Merthyr Railway On Wednesday, the Brecon and Merthyr Southern Lines Bill – for making a railway from the Vale of Neath to Quaker's Yard - was unopposed.

The Old Rhymney Line On Monday, the remainder of the branch from Pengam to Rhymney was opened. Like Tredegar etc., the inhabitants will be able to avail themselves of a cheap return trip to Newport every Saturday.

Emigration The mauls for emigration has infected some of our working men here too. The land of the West seems to be the main point of attraction, although letters received here lately are far from encouraging the movement.

"Merthyr Express" 28 April, 1866

The New Rhymney Line The passenger traffic was very brisk for the opening week. The first telegraphic messages sent directly from Rhymney date from last week. Telegrams of 24 words to the metropolis cost only 2 shillings. The dailies now reach Rhymney at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. On Monday, 30th April, an omnibus will run

between Rhymney, Nantybwhch and Pant Station. Since our notice of the opening, the Directors have announced daily cheap tickets (2s 6d) to Newport, and we are given to understand that unusual facilities will be afforded to societies, excursionists and schools for cheap trips on the Line.

“Merthyr Express” 5 May, 1866

School Inspections The Gellygaer Schools, comprising Pontlottyn and Vochriw, have been examined by Her Majesty’s Inspector of Schols, Rev. H Binns. We understand that both schools have been very successful this year.

“Merthyr Express” 12 May, 1866

School Inspection The mixed school at Pantywaun was inspected by Rev. H. Binns on Tuesday last. The school is reported to be in a flourishing condition, both in respect of attendance, and as regards general efficiency of scholars, a fact speaking much of the teaching, when we remember the school is only in its infancy, the isolation of the district, and moreover, that many of the scholars on their admittance, are quite ignorant of the English language.

“Merthyr Express” 19 May, 1866

Waun Fair The first fair of the season took place last Monday. Business was very brisk.

“Merthyr Express” 2 June, 1866

Shocking and Fatal Accident at Vochriw On Saturday morning last, a shocking accident occurred at the No.1 Pit, Vochriw of the Dowlais Iron Company, by which Thomas Jones of Caeharris, 42, a master haulier, and Ellis Lewis of Fochriw, 28, a hitcher, were killed. The unfortunate men, with three others, were in the act of placing a tram of coal on the carriage at the bottom of the shaft, when, before they had time to get off, the engine started, and they were dragged up the shaft a considerable distance, and they fell from their perilous position. They were taken up by their fellow workmen, having been much bruised, quite dead. Mr. Jones lived at Caeharris where he is well connected, and had a huge business as a master haulier. Lewis was much respected at Vochriw, where he lived. An inquest was opened on Tuesday last at the Horse and Groom, Caeharris, and after the jury had viewed the bodies, the inquiry was adjourned to the 12th June to allow T.E. Wales, Esq., inspector of mines for the district, to be present.

Waun Fair The attendance at the mountain fair was much thinner than usual. With the exception of a few horses and pigs, no stock was on the ground, and business, necessarily, was very slack.

The Drought The continuance of dry weather is already affecting the works. The balance pits are in jeopardy in consequence of the diminished supply from the little reservoirs.

“Merthyr Express” 11 August, 1866

Shocking and Fatal Accident to a Fireman A shocking accident occurred at the top of the No.2 Pit, Pantywaun, last week, which ended in the death of John Davies, aged 24, a fireman. From the evidence given before the Coroner, G. Overton Esq., at the inquiry on Thursday at the Farmer’s Arms, it seems that the deceased had occasion to go to the engine house, and on entering, he put his foot on the connecting rod, and as he attempted to get over it, the rod rose with the motion of the crank, and he was thrown to the ground. He was crushed between the rod that governs the ponderous fly wheel, and an arm plate forming part of the foundation. When taken up, after the engine had stopped, he was insensible, and lived only a few minutes. The fly wheel of the engine is protected by a rail, but the rod is not. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidental Death.”

“Merthyr Express” 25 August, 1866

The Vochriw: Tea Party The children attending the Day and Sunday Schools at Vochriw were regaled with a good tea on Monday last by the Rector of Gellygaer. The usual games were resorted to after tea. The following ladies and gentlemen assisted with the day's arrangements: The Misses Johnson, Miss Loranie, Miss Watson, Miss Griffith etc. The Revs. G.C.F. Harris, D. Morgan, and Townley Esq.

“Merthyr Express” 8 September, 1866

Waun Fair The annual fair noted for the sale of apples and fruit took place last Monday. Business is reported to have been brisk in all departments.

The Cholera in Merthyr The total number of cases of cholera and diarrhea up to Wednesday night is as follows: Cholera – 46 cases with 27 deaths; choleraic diarrhea – 109 cases with 1 death; diarrhea – 501 cases with 1 death; total cases 656 with 29 deaths. These returns exclude the Cyfarthfa district for which Dr. Thomas declined to make a return. Another of the Mahoneys of Sunny Bank died on Thursday, making six in one household.

“Merthyr Express” 15 September, 1866

Cholera at Merthyr Account of deaths in Merthyr Tydfil Parish registered from 23 August to 8 September, 1866: total 44. Upper Merthyr – Dowlais 7; Penydarren 2; Ffynnon Tydfil 18; total 27. Lower Merthyr – Merthyr 10; Gellideg 3; Troedyrhiw 4; total 17.

Burial Ground at Fochriw On Thursday last, 13 September, the Lord Bishop of the diocese consecrated the burying ground belonging to the Church at Vochriw. Several of the local clergy were present. A drenching rain was pouring down throughout the ceremony.

“Merthyr Express” 3 November, 1866

Dreadful Pit Accident A deplorable accident happened at Vochriw No. 1 Pit on Thursday, se'nnight to a sinker named Thomas Buxton, aged 25. Buxton was ascending the air pit, and had nearly reached the top when his foot slipped, and he fell down a depth of 26 yards and was killed on the spot. An inquest on the body has been held, and a verdict of “Accidental Death” returned.

Alarming Outbreak of Cholera at Rhymney We had hoped that the fearful epidemic would not have happened here, seeing that the season was so far advanced, and up to now Rhymney had passed comparatively unscathed; but, alas! for deluded hope. The cholera, we are loathe to state, has visited us in its most aggravated type. On Friday the alarm was given, and up to the time of writing (Monday morning) sixteen fatal cases, if not more, have occurred, and all with 100 yards of each other at Forge-row. The cases were of a most virulent nature, the sufferers only lingering about seven or eight hours. Disinfectants have been unsparingly used Additional medical assistance was at once procured. A very respectable hearse has been made by Mr. Rowlands of the works, and every exertion is being made to retard the progress of the contagion. Some of the deceased were stalwart, health men – men of careful habits, inhabiting some of the cleanest homes in the place. There seems no accounting for the serious outbreak. It is as yet confined to the one spot, which with the exception of being contiguous to the works, varies in nothing from the other parts of Rhymney. The scene at the Church on Sunday was very affecting. The High-street adjoining the Church was thronged with people. Five corpses were brought for interment nearly at the same time. All the mourners were admitted into the Church, but the bodies were carried at once to their last resting places. At many places of worship in the evening, the sermon had especial reference to the visitation. At some of the chapels, prayer meetings are held every evening.

“Merthyr Express” 1 December, 1866

Vochriw Penny Readings We are happy to say that the first of a series of amusing and instructive Penny Readings was held at Vochriw on Monday evening last. It is proposed to continue these meetings fortnightly. The Rev. D. Morgan was the chairman, and the following programme was carried out to the entire satisfaction of a large audience: Welsh reading, “Ifor Glan,” Mr. Hughes; duet, “A, B, C,” Mr. & Mrs. Harris; Welsh reading, Mr. Evans; Song, “The Farmer,” Mr. Hughes; Welsh reading, Rev. Morgan; Song, “Janet’s Choice,” Mrs. Hughes; Welsh reading, Mr. W. Richards; Song, Rev. Morgan; Reading, Mr. W. Richards.

“Merthyr Express” 22 December, 1866

Vochriw Penny Readings The second meeting was held on Monday evening last. The programme on this occasion was far superior to that recently recorded. Rev. D. Davies, curate, Cwmysgwyddgwyn, was chairman, and the following was most warmly received: Welsh reading, Mr. W. Richards; duet, “The Gypsy Countess,” Mr. & Mrs. Harris; reading, “Badwyr Cwmtawe,” Mr. T. Evans; Song, “Y Gwenith Gwyn,” Rev. D. Davies; reading, “The Cockney Sportsman,” Mr. J. Jones; Song, “Smile and Fear,” Mr. M.A. Richards; Welsh recitation, Mr. W. Williams; Song, “Milly’s Faith,” Mrs. Harris; reading, “Y Llong ar Dan,” Rev. D. Davies; Song, “The Murmur of the Shell,” Miss Croft; reading, “Fy Anwyl Fam Fy Hunan,” Rev. D. Morgan; duet, “All’s Well,” Rev. D. & M.D. Davies; song, “Y Fwyalchen,” Mrs. Harris.

Open Letter To the Rector of Gelligaer from Walter Hogg, New Tredegar, 18 December. Vochriw had a licenced room for Church worship with a congregation of 36. On the morning service of the 13th attendance - 0, Evensong - 40.

“Merthyr Express” 29 December 1866

Vochriw Schoolroom We have ascertained that the Vochriw Schoolroom has not been consecrated and that the grant of £3-11-10 reported to have been made to the school was for the first three months after the appointment of a certified teacher, i.e. for the year ending March 31, 1865 and not for the whole year. The grant for the year ending 31st March 1866 was £18-00-02.

“Merthyr Express” 12 January 1867

Dreadful Accident At The Vochriw No.2 Colliery: 2 Men Killed. At 7.30 a.m. on Thursday, a dreadful accident occurred at the No. 2 Colliery Vochriw, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company. Seven workmen entered the cage to descend to their work. Richards, the lander, gave the usual signal to Thomas Lewis, the engineman, who by some unaccountable means put the engine into reverse. The cage was pulled into the sheaves. Four men were thrown on to the top, one held on to the cage, and two, David Williams, haulier, aged 22, and David Thomas, collier, 26, were thrown down the pit, a depth of 440 yards. When found, their bodies were frightfully mutilated, and their remains had to be removed in sacks. Both the unfortunate deceased were single men. The others escaped with but slight injury. The inquest will be opened this day at the Bush Inn, Dowlais.

Ecclesiastical Appointment The Rev. D. Morgan, late curate-in-charge of Vochriw, has now entered upon his duties as curate of Pontlottyn.

“Merthyr Express” 19 January 1867

The Vochriw Accident The inquiry into the cause of the lamentable accident in which David Williams and David Thomas, were killed recently at the No. 2 Colliery, Vochriw, was held on the 18th January. The jury, after hearing the evidence of the many witnesses, returned a verdict of “Accidental Death.” Of course, everybody who reads the report of the inquest will have his own opinion as to the soundness of this

verdict. Whether one agrees with the evidence or not, it is a merciful decision with regards to the luckless engineer, Thomas Lewis, upon whom the witnesses placed the entire blame. It appeared to those who heard the statements of the several persons examined, that there could not possibly be any escape for the poor fellow from any verdict that would have incriminated him, and led to his committal for trial on a most serious charge. To the astonishment of everybody – even of the man himself – the jury saw through other glasses than the Coroner. If any error has been committed in this matter, let us hope it has been on the right side. We would remark here that Lewis appears to be much respected by the colliers employed in the pit, and enjoys their confidence as a steady workman. They got up a memorial to the Coroner, setting forth his sobriety, steadiness, and general good conduct, which they prayed the jury to consider. This memorial may have influenced their verdict.

“Merthyr Express” 26 January 1867

Merthyr Soup Kitchen A notice in our advertising columns will inform our readers that the soup kitchen at St. David’s is open again, and not before it is needed. If any doubter will take the trouble to attend the distribution of soup, he or she will not long be content to keep the purse closed in aid of this most useful charity. The poor, the old, the feeble, the blind and the lame – a very regiment of Lazarenes - the lepers of our social life, crowd to these soup gatherings, and afford glimpses of human nature behind the scenes that cannot fail to rouse our keenest sympathies. Seen here in their own undisguised truthfulness, even the most stubborn heart would be aroused to pity. The donors to this charity are, at present, few; but the few have led off splendidly. We hope the town will come forward earnestly to give its aid in the same commendable spirit.

“Merthyr Express” 16 February 1867

The Ring On Monday morning, there was a “mill” for £1 a side, on the mountain at Twynywaun, between Cornelius Crowley, the “Cock of the Walk” of Dowlais, and James McDonald, the “Chinese Bantam” of Merthyr. Both men had undergone the necessary preparatory training for the fight, and bets, to a large extent in half-pence, were made upon the result of the contest, each champion being in almost equal favour with the lovers of this delightful pastime. Great efforts were made to keep the “whereabouts” from the police, but the blue gentry got scent of the little affair, and resolved that it should not be settled without their assistance. The men, however, started early, tended by their seconds, and when a numerous crowd of admirers arrived on the mountain, a ring was formed. The usual preliminaries considerably abbreviated, the champions set to their brutal work. Fourteen rounds had been fought when the police hove in sight, and the champions skidaddled in two directions. Crowley ran to Rhymney whither he was pursued and surrounded opposite the Police Station there. McDonald fled to the Chinese Covers, from which he was brought by the police, soon after the other arrived from Rhymney. Crowley’s eyes were black and swollen, and he had evidently been more severely punished than McDonald. Both men were brought before Mr. Fowler, and bound over to keep the peace for six months.

“Merthyr Express” 23 March, 1867

Great Footrace On Rhymney Mountain – Plucky Tailors On Monday, the sporting world in Merthyr, Dowlais, Rhymney, Tredegar and Brynmawr, was all astir in prospect of the race to come off between the two “knights of the board” on Rhymney mountain that day. The patrons of Jim Gethin, a tailor of Merthyr, and friends of Tom Davies, alias Talgarth, for some time had been loud in their praises of the pedestrian capabilities of these men, and the result was that they were backed to run

a race for £20. The day fixed for the event was Monday last, the champions having gone into training for the purpose, it was decided, that in spite of wind and weather, the race should not be postponed. Monday, as our readers are aware, was a desparately rough day – the ground was covered with snow, the mountain roads were rendered impassable for the ordinary traffic; but the race, nevertheless, came off. About mid-day, troupes of men wended their several ways from all parts of the district to the rendezvous despite the atrocious conditions. The race was everything to them. The runners left Merthyr in cabs: Gethin, in a four-wheeler, and Talgarth in a hansom. When they got to the top of Dowlais, their difficulties began. They passed through the snow very well until the declivity under the Brecon and Merthyr Railway was reached. There, there was a great drift, and Gethin's cab came to a stand-still. The driver refused to proceed further, whilst the hansom was making the most tremendous efforts to push on. The backers of Gethin got very excited and seized the horses by the head and implored the driver to make another effort. With the aid of some of the sportsmen around, he drove a little further into the snow. Within a short distance, his vehicle got into a deep lock and the horses had to be taken out. Gethin jumped out of his cab and walked through the snow to the ground. The distance was measured, and the ground was cleared by the partisans of the candidates, the work being equally divided. The distance was 200 yards, and owing to the depth of the snow it took an hour and a half to clear it away. All that time, Gethin stood in the snow with a blanket over him, but he, nevertheless, felt the cold very much, and it, no doubt, had some effect upon his running. Talgarth was all the while snugly ensconced in his hansom, and, until the last few minutes, preferred to keep it for himself, no offer being made to Gethin, whose vehicle was a mile off in the snow, to share its comfort. This absence of generous spirit was a matter of severe comment amongst the friends of Gethin. At length, the course having been cleared, the men stripped and took their places at the starting point, the choice of places having been won by Talgarth. The appearance of the runners suggested that the victory would go with Gethin – although he looked very ill – who was the taller, and apparently, the stronger man; but Talgarth was short, and confident of success. The signal given, they started, and at the first rush, Talgarth shot ahead by four yards. He maintained his advantage, to the delight of his backers who were frantic with joy. The ourbursts of Talgarth's supporters continued till the close of the race. In the last 50 yards, Gethin was seen to lessen the distance between him and his opponent, but the distance was too short for him to enable him to overcome the advantage which Talgarth had gained at the start of the race. Talgarth won by about three yards, amidst the loud cheers of his backers. The little fellow was elated upon his victory, and after jumping into his cab, said that he hadn't half run, and that he would run Gethin again and give him ten yards.

“Merthyr Express” 30 March, 1867

Explosion of Firedamp at No. 2 Pit, Vochrhiw There was an explosion of firedamp on Thursday morning at No. 2 Pit Vochrhiw, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company. Two colliers, Thomas Evans of Dowlais, and John Davies of Rhymney, were rather badly burned about their faces and arms. Fortunately, the explosion was confined to the area in which the two men worked, and no further damage was done.

“Merthyr Express” 20 April 1867

Lighting the Streets at Rhymney At a parish meeting held at Bedwellty last week, a decision was made to have gas lights in the streets of Rhymney. The pedestals for holding the gas lamps will shortly be commenced; and ere winter again sets in, the want of that which these columns have so long advocated will be supplied.

“Merthyr Express” 11 May 1867

The Opening of the Pontlottyn Library and Reading Room The Room was formally opened last Wednesday. The intellectual benefit that is likely to accrue to the inhabitants of the place can hardly be exaggerated. It is an epoch in the history of Pontlottyn which ought not to be forgotten. The labouring classes, of which, as yet, the place is nearly composed, have now, for a nominal payment, a comfortable building provided, with no less than twenty one of the best newspapers and serials of the day, in addition to which the committee trust to be able to offer, before long, the advantages of a good lending and reference library.

“Merthyr Express” 18 May 1867

The Waun Fair The May Cattle Fair took place last Monday. Business was not very brisk, the attendance being unusually small

“Merthyr Express” 22 June 1867

Waun Fair This Fair was held last Monday, and was attended by farmers in considerable numbers. The show of stock was not large however, and a very small amount of business in cattle was done. Towards the evening, a great number of persons visited the Fair from Dowlais, Rhymney etc, and before the night the assistance of the police was necessary to quell several fights.

“Merthyr Express” Saturday 29 June 1867

Revision of the Gellygaer Paupers List On Wednesday, a revision of the paupers list for the Gellygaer parish took place at the Picton Inn, Pontlottyn, before the Rev G. C. F. Harries, Messrs J. Perott of Gellygaer, J. Rees & J. Matthews of Rhymney, and J. Edwards of Dowlais. All the paupers were examined, after which the Nuisance Committee met and examined the roads and the new streets. The committee found many of the cottages overcrowded and in a very filthy condition.

Raising The Steamer at Pentwyn Reservoir The steam packet which was built two or three years ago to ply on the lake at Pentwyn for the pleasure of visitors and excursionists, owing to carelessness and the severe storms of last winter, sank in about 30 feet of water, so that no trace of her was seen. No attempt was made to raise her until last week, when Mr. T. Jepson, contractor, of Dowlais, undertook the difficult task of raising her from the water. Without the aid of divers, he commenced his dangerous task, put on several hands with sufficient pulleys and other necessary tackle for the purpose, and after working hard for about twenty hours, succeeded in getting the packet in sight to the joy of the proprietor, Mr. F. Atkins, and all present. In less than two hours afterwards, the packet was afloat and ready to take the voyage around the reservoir which was accomplished with several persons on board.

The Regatta The Regatta at Pentwyn will take place next Thursday, when, if the weather holds, we shall undoubtedly have the Derby on a small scale in Merthyr. We have been accustomed to this as a grand sporting day. If the Brecon and Merthyr Railway company can manage to get their Cyfarthfa branch open to run over that day, we have no doubt that thousands will avail themselves of the opportunity to visit Pentwyn who think a walk to Pant too much for them in the boiling sun. We think it would be worth the Company's while to accomplish this. As to the prizes to be competed for, we have heard no particulars. We believe, however, that prizes to the value of about £60 will be distributed in money and cups, and well trained crews are expected from distant places.

“Merthyr Express” 14 September 1867

Local Railways The railway line from Fochriw to Dowlais etc. is now opened for passenger traffic. Owing to lack of patronage, the Sunday trains on the Brecon - Merthyr line are to be discontinued for some time. Mr. Gage's conveyance, plying

between the Dowlais Top and the Rhymney Railway Stations is also stopped. Since writing the above, a conveyance has again been set on by Mr. Cook of Pontlottyn.

“Merthyr Express” 19 October, 1867

Pantywaun School Chapel On Monday evening last, a thanksgiving service for the harvest was held at the School Chapel, Pantywaun, when the Rev. F. Hughes, vicar of Aberavon, read the service in a most impressive manner, and the Rev. W. Evans, incumbent of Rhymney, preached, as usual, a most appropriate sermon on the Parable of the Tares. Every seat was occupied by an apparently very thoughtful and devout congregation who listened with eager attention to the soul-stirring remarks of the eloquent, and truly practical preacher. The hymns selected were very appropriate for the occasion. The congregational singing was most hearty, as also were the responses in the service, which prove how well the services are appreciated by the people. We are glad to learn that a good collection for the Llandaff Diocesan Church Extension Society was made after the sermon.

“Merthyr Express” 2 November 1867

Typhoid Fever at Phymney This time last year, the town was thrown into a state of great distress by the ravage made by the cholera. We now hear of several cases of typhoid fever, and we are sorry to state that two grown up children of Mr. Jones, Stores Clerk, have succumbed to the fever.

“Merthyr Express” 9 November, 1867

Great Colliery Disaster at Ferndale A disastrous explosion occurred at Blaenllechau, Ferndale, on Friday last, 8th November. 170 men and boys were killed.

“Merthyr Express” 4 January 1868

Shocking Accident at Vochrhiw No.1 Pit Sidings A terrible accident happened to an Irishman named Michael Lane, aged 30, of Penydarren, on Monday evening, by which he came to his death. It appears that the deceased worked on the siding of No.1 Pit, and he was engaged on Monday night in removing wagons when he got caught between the buffers of two wagons and received dreadful external and internal injuries. He was attended by Mr. Cresswell and Mr. Burne, but after suffering great agony for twenty four hours, he died on the following night. We understand that the usual “wake” was kept up on the night after his death.

The Drop: Reduction of Wages We regret to report that the bad conditions of trade has compelled the iron masters, at length, to resort to notices of a termination of present contracts – which means a reduction of wages – but to what extent is not stated, but we have no doubt, that it will be as little as possible. Hard as it will be to bear on many workmen with families, yet we counsel them to accept it, as we feel now an adverse change of times, which must, eventually, mend. It can't be always bad.

“Merthyr Express” 1 February 1868

The Public Health We are sorry to hear that typhus is prevalent all over Dowlais, and the doctors are heavily worked. The sooner we can bring our drainage into full operation the better.

“Merthyr Express” 15 February 1868

Colliers Strike Last week we reported that many of the colliers in Tir Phil and New Tredegar were on strike. On Monday it was reported that colliers in many of the other pits had joined the Monmouthshire strike. This is most unfortunate, occurring as it does when the prospect is so gloomy. The masters confidently assure the workmen that they are in no way responsible for the present decline in wages, and there is too ample evidence for this assertion. It is, therefore, generally felt, that it would have certainly been discrete on the part of the workmen to acquiesce in the

inevitable reduction and to have relied on the masters to have again advanced the wages when the present deplorable, and nearly unprecedented stagnation in trade has passed away.

“Merthyr Express” 22 February 1868

Rhymney Valley Coal Strike The state of affairs reported last week has not improved in this valley, and it does not seem likely that there will be a speedy settlement of the dispute. The workmen of the Hope and Brithdir Pits are still out, as well as those of the Powell Duffryn Level. All of these pits produce house coal. The masters are determined to adhere to the reduction of 3d. per ton, and it seems that the workmen will not return to their work on these terms. The Tir Phil Pit of the Rhymney Iron Company have working at the reduced rate. It appears that intimidation has proved to great an agency for them, and that the workmen of this pit have deemed it advisable to give notice of their intention to leave their work when their contracts expire on the 16th March. Colliers at Powells Duffryn pits at Tredegar and Aberdare have agreed to the reduction. A large meeting of colliers took place on the mountain, near Tir Phil, on Friday last. The body was addressed by several workmen. The addresses were on the whole very temperate, but, in every case, enjoined on the workmen the imperative necessity in not yielding in the slightest to the present demand of the masters. The meeting was well conducted – the men were particularly orderly. When the addresses were being delivered not a voice was heard except that of the speaker. The meeting over, a procession was formed, marching through Tir Phil, Tredegar etc. and finally dispersing at Cwmsyfiog. The number was estimated to be between 1,000 and 1,200.

“Merthyr Express” 21 March 1868

Fatal Accident at Pantywaun Pit A sad accident occurred in the Pwll Enoch, or No. 1 Mine Pit of the Dowlais Company at Pantywaun, on Saturday last. A miner, named William Jones, 50 years of age, was at work, when a stone, about half a ton in weight, fell upon him, and so severely injured him that he died before he could be removed to the surface. An inquest has been held and a verdict of “Accidental Death” returned.

Serious Collision on the Cwmbargoed Railway The Vochriw engine with two trucks and 40-50 men, boys and women, collided with an engine.

“Merthyr Express” 28 March 1868

Colliers Strike All Tir Phil and New Tredegar Pits (except Powell’s) are out on strike.

“Merthyr Express” 11 April 1868

The Atlantic Telegraph One of the first telegrams we have known as coming to Merthyr was received by a respectable inhabitant a few days ago. It was five words only and cost £6. The intelligence it bore was a true domestic tragedy. A person in America sent money home to his wife to pay for her journey across the Atlantic, and the same day that she received the money, she had the telegram to say that her husband was dead.

“Merthyr Express” 6 June 1868

The Merthyr Tydfil Emigration Society The object of this Society which was established on the 18th May 1868, is to purchase land in the American States, in order to establish its members thereon to follow mineral and agricultural pursuits. Members will become free holders of their respective lots, and such land to be inherited by their descendants for ever, in a country where all people are equal in the sight of the law. The members of this society are not to be sent to the overcrowded towns, cities and manufacturing districts, but chiefly to one of its States which will

secure the success and welfare of industrious emigrants. That state is Missouri, which is celebrated for richness of soil, mineral wealth, and salubrious climate. This Society will include colliers, miners, and others, to all of whom impartial facilities for emigrating will be afforded. The first of the six conditions for entry is that every member who intends to emigrate shall pay into the fund a monthly contribution of 1s. 1d. or 6½d. fortnightly, and 3d. entrance fee

The Colliers Strike It is with very great satisfaction that we record that this protracted strike is now virtually at an end in this district. Nearly all the pits are now in full working, the men having accepted, wisely, the proposed reduction.

“Merthyr Express” 13 June 1868

A Remarkable String of Accidents on the Brecon & Merthyr Railway The Brecon & Merthyr Railway has had its share of accidents since its opening, though considering the nature of the line, and that is a single set of rails, it must be admitted that it has been worked with very fair success, as far as the mere working is concerned. But in the last week however, there have been three sad accidents on the line, involving serious loss of life and property. On Friday, a passenger train left Pontstycyll Junction for Vochriw, and shortly after leaving Dowlais Top, the driver thought he saw something awkward in the action of one of the wheels. He watched it for some time, and then, in order to have a better observation leaned some way on the side of the engine. Just as he did so the engine passed through a bridge, and going at a tolerably rapid pace, the unfortunate driver's head came violently into collision with the telegraph insulators. The fireman was at this time looking out on the other side, and after passing the bridge about fifty yards, on looking round missed his mate. He stopped the train at once, and on going back found the driver under the bridge between the wall and the rail, quite senseless and bleeding from the head. With the help of the guard, he was put into the van and taken to Vochriw, and doctors sent for, but he expired the same night about twelve o'clock. The doctor was soon in attendance, and it was found that he had sustained a compound comminuted fracture of the skull, and a wound had been inflicted of such size that part of the substance of the brain had been lost. At the inquest held by the coroner, G. Overton Esq., Mr. T.D. Roberts, the Company engineer, said that the distance of the wall from the rail was 3 feet 9 inches, and the bridge was 14 feet high. Brackets and insulators of the telegraph were fixed just at the turn of the arch and were 2 feet only from the engine, which projected over the wheels, but that was in accordance with the Board of Trade regulations. The name of the unfortunate driver was John Evans, 27 years of age, remarkably sober and steady, and he leaves a widow and one child. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidental Death.”

“Merthyr Express” 20 June 1868

The Cambrian Emigration Society This Society, which has just been formed, [distinct it should be stated from the Workers' Emigration Fund], held a meeting at the Temperance Hall on Monday night, W. Simons, High Constable, in the chair. There was a numerous attendance. The chairman opened the meeting with an excellent speech descriptive of the country of North America, its industrial resources and requirements, and pointed out its advantages as a field of emigration.

“Merthyr Express” 21 November 1868

Typhus at Dowlais For some time past, we regret to say, typhus has been raging at Dowlais, and has challenged the efforts of the doctors to keep it under. In order to prevent the spread of the danger, the matter was brought by Mr. Clark before both the Board of Guardians and the Board of Health, and it appearing that the case involved difficulties which could hardly be met by either Board singly, they

determined to act together. The House of Refuge at Tydfil's Well was ordered to be thoroughly cleaned, furnished, and supplied with comforts and medicaments for the sick, and it was done. Mr. Jones, the relieving officer, went to Dowlais on Saturday with the ambulance to bring several sick persons down, but they refused to be removed in some cases, and in others, those in charge refused to have them removed. On Thursday, the subject was brought before the Board of Health, and it was stated that unless the sick persons were removed the contagion would spread and affect the healthy, endangering the health of the neighbourhood. The Board resolved that the compulsory powers which they possess should be carried out in the interest of the sick and of the healthy by whom they are surrounded. We hope the poor people who are attacked by this terrible disease will not offer a futile opposition to measures which are devised for their good, and the good of those in health by whom they are surrounded. It is essential that the sick are removed to suitable healthy quarters, and it is vital to those in health to have the contagion removed from their midst. There is really nothing harsh or cruel in the steps resolved upon by the Boards, and we conjure the people to submit to them quietly.

“Merthyr Express” 9 January 1869

Fochriw There are from 1,000 to 1,100 workmen belonging to the Dowlais Collieries employed at Fochriw, and out of that number, many reside at Rhymney and Pontlottyn as well as in the Fochriw. From the commencement, the wages were always paid at the Dowlais office, and that was against every trade in this neighbourhood, and very inconvenient to the women on Saturday. Under these circumstances, the colliers sent to G.T. Clark, Esq., to ask him to get their money paid at Fochriw instead of Dowlais, and we are happy to state that he has granted this, and a doctor to reside amongst the men at Fochriw. The colliers return their sincere thanks to Mr. Clark for his kindness, and to Mr. Menclaus, and Mr. Truran, coal agent, for getting this done.

The Rainfall in 1868 By the kindness of Dr. Dyke, Merthyr, we have been forwarded some interesting statistics relative to the rainfall of 1868. The total rainfall for 1868 was 61.59 inches. In the dry season in June, half an inch fell on two days only. In December, in the wet season, 13.69 inches fell in 24 days, a most unusual quantity. The total number of rainy days in the year was 159.

“Merthyr Express” 16 January 1869

Fatal Accident in the Cwmbargoed Pits On the 9th instant, a fatal accident occurred in the Cwmbargoed (Penydarren) Pit, resulting in the death of a workman named Thomas Evans. Deceased was a collier, aged 28, and on the day in question was at work in his stall when a mass of rubbish and coal fell upon him from the roof, and so severely crushed him that death ensued before he could be released from the debris. An inquest has been held at the Talbot Inn, and a verdict of “Accidental Death” returned.

“Merthyr Express” 20 February 1869

The Game of “Cat and Dog” at Merthyr We are glad to observe that Superintendent Thomas has commenced a crusade against the players of the well known game of “cat and dog.” This game, at all times attended with some risk to its players, is particularly dangerous when played in the roads with people passing to and fro. But for some time past, boys have grown so bold that it is common enough to find half a dozen parties of them playing in the middle of the streets. Several serious accidents have resulted from this, and one of the worst features of the game is the large stone from which the game is played. This is placed in the middle of the road, and is stumbling block to horses, and a source of extreme danger to the occupants of light

carriages – the stones being generally large enough to brake the spring of the vehicle, or indeed, if driven at a brisk pace, to upset it altogether. A youth was summoned and fined in the Police Court on Saturday for this offence, and the police will proceed against all offenders until they have driven the “cat and dog” from the streets.

“Merthyr Express” 20 February 1869

The Spread of Typhus at Dowlais Mr. Dyke reported that typhus was spreading rapidly at Dowlais, and as many as fifteen deaths had occurred from this disease since the start of the year. The manner in which it spread was this – persons attacked with the disease moved into clean houses and communicated the contagion there. Healthy families moved into the houses vacated by the deceased houses before they had been properly fumigated and disinfected, and thus took the disease. Up to the present all the means employed to check the spread of the disease had utterly failed, and he suggested that an application be made to the Privy Council to appoint an inquiry into the causes, with a view to the employment of more stringent measures to deal with the disease. The usual course was for the Privy Council to send down some eminent medical man who thoroughly understood the disease and all its conditions. He would inspect the place and report to the Board of Health, and the Privy Council would then make an order that would compel the Board to carry out the advice given. Mr. Harris then asked if the recent mortality was above the average for typhus. Mr. Dyke said it was saying in that it had increased from 20 in the 1,000, to 22 in the 1,000.

“Merthyr Express” 6 March 1869

Fatal Accident Inquest An inquiry was held on Thursday week at the Rising Sun Inn, Vochriw, before G. Overton, Esq., Coroner, touching the death of Lewis Phillips, who was killed the previous day. From the evidence, it appeared that the deceased had come there to seek employment, and in coming down from the pits over a tip, came rather suddenly on to a siding where there were some trucks being shunted. Deceased, no doubt, thinking he had sufficient time, endeavoured to cross the line, and was caught by the trucks and jammed between them. The engine driver, and another man came immediately to his assistance, but deceased never spoke, and died within a quarter of an hour. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidental Death.” The deceased had only been married for just seven months.

“Merthyr Express” 24 July 1869

Numbering the Houses at Rhymney When the streets were named some eighteen months ago, we were promised that they should be numbered. The process has now been commenced, and most likely, before this appears, the greater portion will have been completed. We are sorry to hear that some landlords object to have numbers placed on the doors; this is a pity as it will only cause more confusion to our letter carriers, and the public generally.

“Merthyr Express” 4 September 1869

The Pontlottyn Riot – Two Deaths Two of the persons who were injured in the riots of the 22nd August have since died. The first death was that of Andrew Canty, which took place on the 26th. Catherine Carrell died on Sunday afternoon. An inquest has been opened and post mortem examinations in each case. The inquest stands adjourned. Five of the supposed ring leaders were apprehended on Monday morning last before the magistrates at Merthyr Police Court on a charge of willful murder.

Coal Discovered Coal has been discovered at the new pit being sunk by the Rhymney Iron Company at Deri. It is the 4 foot vein. [The Darren Pit]

“Merthyr Express” 2 October 1869

Fearful Boiler Explosion at Pantywaun – One Man Killed Others Seriously Injured

A dreadful boiler explosion occurred on Sunday morning last at Pantywaun No. 4 Pit, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company, whereby one man named John Williams was killed. Deceased was a fireman. Other persons were seriously injured, one, it was thought fatally, but we have heard that he is now likely to recover. Such was the force of the explosion that a portion of the boiler, about 2½ feet in length was driven a distance of about 200 yards. It stuck on the railway in its flight, and the rails were much bent. Other portions of the boiler were embedded in the tips not far from the Pits. On examination, one of the plates of the boiler was worn considerably. It was the intention to put a new boiler in the place of the one now exploded, one having been ready on the spot for some weeks, but for some cause the work has been delayed. An inquest opened on Tuesday at the Red Lion Inn, Dowlais, on the body of John Williams. After viewing the body, the jury proceeded to the scene of the catastrophe. On their return, the inquiry was adjourned until Tuesday, October 12th.

“Merthyr Express” 20 November 1869

Vochriw Penny Readings The first meeting of the season was held on Tuesday evening in the National School room under the presidency of M. Turner, surgeon. The Deri Glee Party contributed. Mr. W. A. Hopkins of Pontlottyn was on the harmonium.

“Merthyr Express” 11 December 1869

Shocking Accident at Vochriw No. 1 Pit: Breaking of the Winding Rope: Two Men Killed

We regret to state that early on Monday morning last, a dreadful accident happened at Vochriw No.1 Pit belonging to the Dowlais Iron Company whereby two workmen lost their lives. It appears that at about 8 o'clock, two men named William Dunstan, 41, married, and William Long, 19, single, entered the cage for the purpose of going out of the pit. They ascended safely until the cage was about 250 yards from the bottom – about two thirds of the depth of the shaft, when the winding broke, and the cage, with the two unfortunate men in it, was precipitated to the bottom. It fell with a terrible crash, and, as it may be imagined, cage and men were dashed to pieces, death being instantaneous. The mutilated remains of the men were collected by their workmates at the bottom, and as quickly as possible removed to their houses. Long had gone home from work that morning, shortly after six, but having left his pick behind, returned for it, and was returning to the surface when the fearful accident befell him. On Tuesday, the Coroner opened the inquest on the bodies at the Hollybush Inn, Dowlais; but no evidence was taken, and the customary formalities of observing the bodies having been observed, the inquiry was adjourned until next Tuesday, when it is hoped some evidence will be forthcoming which will give some satisfactory account of this accident. We have heard that there is now, or was recently a gentleman in the neighbourhood who has patented an invention that would prevent accidents of this description. The sooner its practical efficacy can be put to the test and proved the better.

“Merthyr Express” 15 January 1870

Another Dreadful Accident at Vochriw No.1 Colliery: Braking of the Rope: Five Persons Killed

The No.1 Pit Vochriw, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company, has been the scene of another and more fearful accident than that which occurred there only a month ago, on the 6th December – though each accident is in every respect similar except in the amount of life lost. It will be remembered that the accident on the 6th December, arose through the snapping of the rope, which

precipitated cage and men to the bottom. The Dowlais Company's collieries are worked with spiral drums, which Mr. Wales, the government inspector of mines, has described as a capital invention in as much as it enables the enormous weight of the cage, which every deep colliery has to contend with, to be raised with ease and without any extra power. On that account it is a valuable economic invention – but the safe working of the spiral drum depends upon the angle formed between the rope and the pulley over the shaft and certain portions of the drum. Mr. Wales says that this angle ought not to exceed 10 or 11 degrees, and he attributed the former accident to the fact that the angle was as much as 15 degrees. On that occasion, two men had got into the cage and signaled to be drawn up. When the cage was about 250 yards from the top, from the cause named, the rope overlapped its coil on the drum, and in slipping in its place caused a jerk which snapped the rope, and led to the terrible catastrophe. The accident which we now have to record arose from the same cause precisely. On Saturday night between 6 and 7, the No.2 Pit, the Pit ordered by the Company to be the exclusive means of going into and out of the colliery by men and horses, was busy in bringing the colliers to the surface. There were then at No.1 Pit, the over-man Morgan Jones, 48, who resided in Francis-street, and the following hitchers who were usually employed in working the shaft, Thomas Rees, 44, Ellen-street, Penydarren; Hugh Thomas, 92, Absolam Andrew, 22, and David Davies, 15. It being late in the evening, they were probably anxious to get out of the colliery as quickly as possible, and not caring to walk through the workings to No.2 shaft, they got into the cage at No.1, and signaled to be drawn up. They must have known that it was against the company's rule to go up through that shaft, but in their anxiety to get home, no doubt, they set it aside for the moment and attempted to ascend. They were nearly successful – but a cruel fate and a terrible death awaited them in only a few moments. The signal was given and the engine started. The cage was drawn swiftly to the top, and had reached to within 27 yards of the bank, the engine having also slackened speed, when the rope overlapped its coil on the drum, and in slipping off caused a jerk by which it was snapped. The catastrophe was horrible. The cage with the five men was precipitated to the bottom, where they were all literally dashed to pieces, and the remains of the unfortunate fellows had to be gathered in pieces for conveyance to their homes. As may be supposed, the accident created a sensation of horror to the enginemen, banksmen, and others who were witness to it, but on recovery they lost no time in communicating it to the heads of this branch of the works, and just as people were returning from their shopping, it became known in Dowlais and threw the place into consternation, having been much exaggerated at first. In all truth, however, it was bad enough in its naked features. The over-man, we are sorry to say leaves a widow and several children to mourn his terrible fate. On Monday, G. Overton, Esq., the coroner, opened an inquest on the bodies at the Bush Inn, Dowlais, but no evidence was taken. The bodies were viewed and certificates of burial granted, after which the inquiry was adjourned to enable the government inspector to be present. So shocking a calamity, following so rapidly on the heels of another, and apparently from precisely the same cause as the first, calls for a searching investigation. It is strange that a rope which is strong enough to bear the strain of a quarter of a miles length should be cut asunder by a jerk with a mere cage and five men depending on it at only 27 yards distance.

“Merthyr Express” 5 March 1870

Merthyr Police Court: Cat and Dog Thomas McCarthy, Thomas Miskell, Daniel Callaghan, Michael Callaghan and Michael Welsh were summoned for playing the game of “Cat and Dog,” at Pontlottyn, to the danger of the public traffic. P.S. Jenkins

proved the charge and described the character of the game. He said that he had received many complaints about it, and cautioned the boys and their parents, but all to no purpose, the boys would persist in playing the game. The boys were cautioned and fined 1 shilling and costs each.

Educational Meetings: Mr. Foster's Bill A public meeting was held on Tuesday week, at Twyn Carno Schoolroom, for the purpose of considering Mr. Foster's Educational Bill now before the House of Commons. Mr. John Lewis presided. There were also present the Revs. Aaron Davies, E. Evans, J.P. Williams, Messrs. Koverschief, Prosser, Jones, Protheroe, and several other gentlemen who take great interest in the matter. The chairman, after alluding briefly to the object of the meeting, called on the Rev. E. Davies to speak on the subject. Mr. Davies spoke at some length and explained the disadvantages that the Bill would cause to non-conformists, and at the conclusion moved the following resolution: "That this meeting greatly laments that the educational measure of the government contains plans of action altogether inconsistent with nonconforming consciences. This meeting desires that Mr. H. Richard and his fellow representatives from Wales in Parliament should oppose the measure to the utmost, because if this measure becomes law, it will be the means of oppressing dissenters, and will destroy all the value of the labours and sacrifices in connection with British Schools." This was seconded by Mr. Koverschief who spoke mainly on the same side, and was carried. The Revs. M. Wright and Aaron Davies also agreed with the first speaker.

Another meeting was held on Monday last at Moriah Chapel. It was agreed that the Bill should not be condemned entirely. A Committee was appointed to select the portions of the Bill that were suitable, and to reject the others, and it was also resolved to forward the suitable portions to the promoters of the Bill as early as possible. A meeting was also held at Pontottyn on Thursday last, full particulars of which will appear later.

"Merthyr Express" 12 March 1870

Laying the Foundation Stone of Deri British School Great was the excitement and bustle in the usually quiet and rapidly progressing village of Deri on Monday last, on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the British School. At 1 o'clock, all the school children assembled in Bethel chapel, and were joined by the Sunday Schools of the different denominations of the place, together with the committee of the British School, and forming a procession, they marched to Plasycod, the residence of the chairman of the committee. From thence they wended their way to Deri House and Bargoed Inn, and then ascended the Darren Hill as far as the residence of Mr. Watson, escorting from thence C.H. James, Esq., Merthyr, and his lady, to the ground where the new school room is to be built, and on which a goodly number of people had assembled. Mr. James stated the object of their meeting. Mr. J.M. Davies, Plasycod, presented Mrs. James, on behalf of the British School Committee, with a silver trowel for the service of laying the foundation of the Deri British School. Mrs. James then, in a graceful manner, then proceeded with her allotted task, which when performed in a satisfactory if not "workmanlike" manner, amidst great cheering. Afterwards, the schoolchildren were regaled with tea and cake which were supplied by the committee. A lecture was delivered the same evening in the Calvinistic Methodist Chapel by Dr. Rees of Swansea, the proceeds of which went to aid the British Schools.

"Merthyr Express" 19 March 1870

Glamorgan Spring Assizes: Fatal Accident at Fochriw A charge of the manslaughter of Morgan Jones of Merthyr against Matthew Truran and William Williams was postponed.

Merthyr Police Court: Drunk and Riotous David Evans, who appeared in Court with his head bandaged, was summoned for being drunk at Vochriw on the 22nd February. P.S. Jenkins proved the case. Evans was fined 5 shillings and costs, and in default, seven days in gaol.

“Merthyr Express” 7 May 1870

Explosion at No.2 Pit Vochriw: 2 Men and 15 Horses Killed An explosion occurred late on Saturday night, at the No.2 Pit, Vochriw, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company, by which one man was killed, and another so seriously injured that his life is despaired of. Fifteen horses were also killed. It is fortunate that there were only two men in the pit at the time of the explosion; otherwise the loss of life would have been very considerable. These men were in charge of the horses, and they were found in the roadway between the stables. The accident was discovered by a flueman belonging to No.1 pit about eleven o'clock at night, who smelled sulphur coming up No.2 shaft. He immediately gave an alarm. A number of men descended the pit and found the poor fellows in the roadway, close together, one dead and the other unconscious. Their names were Robert Hughes and Thomas Jones. The cause of the accident will probably remain a mystery, as Thomas Jones has since died. The pit has been much damaged. This pit has been a very unfortunate one for accidents, being the one where the rope snapped on two separate occasions; and where a platelayer, named Robert Jones, lost his life in it on Saturday by a fall of rock upon him

H.M.I. at Vochriw H.M.I. Rev. Binns visited Vochriw School on Tuesday week. 80 pupils were examined. A tea party, given to the children of the National School by the Rev. G.C.F. Harries, was held on Friday last.

“Merthyr Express” 14 May 1870

Fatal Accident Jumping on to a Tram in Motion A boy named John Peters, aged 13, working as a collier at Vochriw, lost his life this week by jumping on a coal truck whilst in motion. The boy had left work, and was returning to his home at Dowlais with his companions. In his carelessness, he attempted to get into a truck which was passing. He fell and slipped down to the rails and several trucks passed over him, severing his legs from his body near the hips. He died on the following day. Many lads have lost their lives, and others maimed for life from attempting to get into moving trucks. The jury returned a verdict of “Accidental Death.”

The Late Explosion at Vochriw The adjourned inquest on the two men who lost their lives in the late explosion at No.2 Pit, Vochriw, was held at the Holly Bush Inn, Dowlais, on Tuesday, under G. Overton, Esq., coroner. Several witnesses were examined whose evidence was unimportant. Mr. Mathew Truran, Coal Agent of the Dowlais Iron Company, said: I have inquired into the circumstances of the late explosion, and am of the opinion that it took place at the entrance to the stables at No. 5 Cross-heading, and that it arose from the two doors at the bottom of the heading being left open by the ostlers who were obliged to take the horses through the doors from the stables to the place they got their water. This would have caused an accumulation of gas to arise in the extreme ends of the workings, and this was ignited by the light kept in the stables. Very little damage was done to the workings. Mr. Wales, the government inspector, concurred with Mr. Truran as to the cause of the explosion. The Coroner summed up the evidence, and the jury returned the following verdict: “We find that the deceased came to their deaths by an explosion of firedamp, and that the explosion was produced by some doors being left open.”

“Merthyr Express” 11 June 1870

Whit Monday The Rhymney, Deri and Vochriw races will come off on the 27th, when, if the weather is favourable, we anticipate there will be a large gathering of all classes, as the racecourse is in easy access of all places in the neighbourhood, and is announced as the best in Glamorgan.

“Merthyr Express” 2 July 1870

Rhymney, Deri and Vochriw Races and Picnic This annual gathering came off on Monday last. There were a goodly number of persons present as the weather proved favourable. The racing commenced at 2.30 with a race for Galloways not exceeding 14 hands, followed by a pony race not exceeding twelve hands. In the hurdle race there was only one entrant, and in the pony race, 13 hands, three raced for a purse of three sovereigns. There followed a footrace of 200 yards, and then one of 300 yards. A variety of sports was provided for visitors, and the Blackwood Artillery Band was in attendance, and the lovers of dancing had an ample opportunity of indulging in it. Everything passed off tolerably well, but we are sorry to say that a great deal of drunkenness prevailed and several fights took place.

Accident at Vochriw Pit A young man named William Davies, residing in Rhymney, and another whose name we have not been able to ascertain, residing at Pontlottyn, met with a serious accident on Wednesday morning, by a fall of stone in the Vochriw Pit.

“Merthyr Express” 16 July 1870

Extraordinary Discovery of a Skeleton at Vochriw Last week, the workmen employed by the Dowlais Iron Company in pumping the water out of the old Tunnel Shaft at Vochriw, preparatory to sinking it down to the coal, made a remarkable discovery. The Tunnel Shaft was commenced many years ago, but abandoned after a depth of about 80 yards was reached. The top was then covered with planks, and the shaft gradually filled with water. In pumping the water out, the workmen discovered the skeleton of a man at the bottom of the shaft, and beside it a chain and a tram wheel. The flesh was nearly totally decomposed, but although a neckerchief was found which had in no way lost its original colour, yet there was no cord or any evidence to show that the wheel and chain had ever been attached to the body. The remains were removed, and Mr. Creswell, the chief of the Dowlais medical staff, formed it into a complete skeleton showing that it was that of a man. Of course, the discovery led to the immediate suggestion of a murder, and persons in the neighbourhood recalled a strange incident which happened there in 1859, when one, Richard Jones, a single man, about 30 years of age, was missed on a Sunday evening in June. He had been drinking at Vochriw, and left in the company of some men going in the direction of Blaen Rhymney. He was not seen alive afterwards, and his cap was found on the road. A search was made, and although the pit was approached, it was not for a moment suspected that he would have got in as the planks covered it closely. The water in the pit was about 60 feet deep. On Saturday, the Coroner, G. Overton Esq., opened an inquest and adjourned it to the 13th instant.

The Vochriw Pit Tragedy On Wednesday, the Coroner, G. Overton, resumed his inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of Richard Jones, whose remains were discovered at the bottom of the Tunnel Shaft at Vochriw on the 1st inst. A number of witnesses were examined, and from their evidence it was pretty clear that the deceased met with his death by foul means. At the time he was missed, the Tunnel Shaft was enclosed by a wall a hard high, and the mouth was covered over with planks so close together that a child even could not fall through. It would have been impossible, therefore, for any person to have committed suicide without leaving

some traces of the act behind. When the man was missed the planks were undisturbed. The sinker, Henry Jones, stated that as they got to the bottom of the shaft he first picked up a bone which he thought belonged to some animal; then he came upon a tram wheel which he raised but found it was attached to a chain. Thereupon he raised the chain and brought up some more bones; he tugged at the chain and then brought up a portion of the trunk of a human body thorax, with the ribs bare on the outside and the stomach only partially decomposed. There was a loop in the chain as though it had been round something the size of a man's wrist. The skull was then found, and afterwards on digging, he turned up out of the mud a boot with a human foot in it. The tram wheel was identified by Mr. Truran as belonging to trams used at a level about half a mile off, in work at that time, but since closed; and the chain was part of a chain that had been in use on an incline in Vochriw level about a mile away. There was no evidence of mention as to the person at whose hands Jones met his death, but it was stated that a man named Penry, now in America, and one "Wat Bach" had, some years afterwards, made references to Jones that showed that they were cognizant of his death. "Wat Bach" for instance, accused a man named Michael Harris, who gave evidence, of being the cause of Jones' death. The Coroner again adjourned the inquest for a week.

"Merthyr Express 10 December 1870

Fatal Fall at Vochriw An inquest was held before Mr. G. Overton, at the Rising Sun Inn, Vochriw, on Thursday, to inquire into the cause of death of David Evans, aged 12, was killed in one of the Dowlais Company's pits the previous night. The deceased was working in the Rhas Las vein when rock from the roof fell on him, killing him instantly. There appeared to be no blame attached to anyone, and the jury recorded a formal verdict.

"Merthyr Express" 4 February 1871

Adoption of a School Board in Gellygaer The result of the polling on Monday as to the adoption of a School Board for the parish of Gellygaer, was officially known on Wednesday morning, when Mr. Frank James, the summoning officer, cast up the votes at the Boardroom of the Workhouse as follows, giving a majority for the Board of 127.

	For the Board	Against the Board
Gellygaer Booth	93	98
Deri	138	55
Pontlottyn Upper with Vochriw	155	193
Pontlottyn Lower and Tir Phil	221	144
Newton with Pantywaun	62	52

"Merthyr Express" 25 February 1871

Benefit Concert A grand complimentary benefit concert was given to Mrs. Harris of Vochriw on Thursday evening at the National School Room, Pontlottyn. Mrs. Harris has rendered great assistance at Penny Readings and other entertainments in the neighbourhood, and the committee determined on getting up this concert on a grand scale, and we are happy to say that it proved a decided success. The principal performers were Mr. & Mrs. Frost, Cardiff; Miss Annie Evans, Rhymney; Mrs. Harris, Vochriw; Mr. Robert Rees (Eos Morlais), Swansea; and the Bethania Glee Party, Dowlais. The whole of the pieces were given remarkably well, many of them being encored. Mr. Frost's harp solos were considered the gems of the evening, as such no harp playing has ever been heard before at the place. There was a crowded assemblage, and we have no doubt that a handsome sum has been realized.

"Merthyr Express" 24 June 1871

Gelligaer School Board The monthly meeting was held on Friday at the Reading Room, Pontlottyn. There were present: Mr. J. Rees (in the chair); Mr. E. Lewis, and the Revs. A. Davies and J.P. Williams. A report was read from Mr. J. Williams of Merthyr with regard to the Deri British School, and it was resolved that the offer of the committee be accepted, and that the Clerk apply to the Education Department for leave to take the said school. Having read the report of the statistical committee, it was ordered that an application be made Registrar General for copies of the Census return of children between the ages of 3 and 5, and 5 and 13 in Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the parish. A map of the parish, prepared by Mr. F. James, was approved. The Rev. A. Davies gave notice that at the next meeting he would move that they erect a school at Pontlottyn to accommodate 350 children, and another at Vochriw for 130. A petition presented by Carmel Chapel, Vochriw, asking the Board to erect a school there of a non-denominational character was received. The meeting was adjourned to June 30 for a report from the Statistical Sub-Committee.

“Merthyr Express” 29 July 1871

Gelligaer School Board The monthly meeting of the Board was held on the 21st inst. at the Reading Room, Pontlottyn, when there were present Mr. J. Rees, in the chair, Revs. J.P. Williams, A. Davies, and Mr. J. Lewis. It was resolved that the transfer of the Deri British School to the Board be proceeded with at once.

The report of the Statistical Sub-Committee for Vochriw children is as follows:

Number of children aged 3 to 13 is 266; 3-5 = 64; 5-13 = 202.

Deduct 7% for absentees = 247.

The National School provides places for 127 children. With increasing population the new school should be built for at least 150. Present accommodation = 127; deficiency = 139.

“Merthyr Express” 19 August 1871

School Treat On Thursday last, a treat was given to the pupils of the Vochriw National School by Rev. T. Theophilus and his congregation.

“Merthyr Express” 26 August 1871

Gellygaer School Board The monthly meeting was held last Friday at the Reading Room, Pontlottyn. The Board met with the Education Department Inspector. An elaborate report was read by the Clerk relative to the Gellygaer Charities which were left to the parish by Edward Lewis of Gilfach Bargoed in 1715. It was resolved to publish 200 copies of the report explaining the Charities for parishioners.

“Merthyr Express” 16 September 1871

Vochriw An entertainment will be held at the National School Room on Monday evening next. The Rev. T. Theophilus, the much respected curate, is about to leave the village, and this will be a farewell concert.

“Merthyr Express” 23 September 1871

Fochriw Popular Readings On Monday evening, a very interesting entertainment of the above kind was given at the National School Room. Mr. B. Jones, Rhymney, was chairman. The proceedings commenced with an overture on the piano, ably rendered by Mr. Theophilus, after which, a variety of readings, recitations, songs, vocal and instrumental duets, followed in fast succession. It is pleasing to observe that out of the lengthy programme there was not one piece left out through the performer not being present. Among the parties who rendered great assistance were Mrs. Harris, Misses Jones, Meredith and Richards; Messrs. Phillips, Richards, Owen, D. James, T. Jones, and Clarke. Another meeting will be held on Monday week.

Gelligaer School Board The monthly meeting took place on Tuesday at Pontlottyn Reading Room. The members present were Mr. G. Martin, Mr. J. Rees, Messrs R.

Laybourne, J. Lewis, the Revs. Aaron Davies & J.P. Williams. It was resolved that members Martin, Lewis and Revs. Davies and Williams should meet at Fochriw on Monday to decide a site for the Board School.

On Monday, the Committee met at Vochriw, and after inspecting various sites, selected a spot of ground near the Railway Station for the building of a Schoolroom.

“Merthyr Express” 30 September 1871

The Waun Fair The “apple and pear” – one of the most important of our Waun fairs – was held last Monday. A large number of farmers arrived by the morning train, and we learn that the attendance was quite as numerous as on any previous occasion. Stock of every kind was plentiful and obtained excellent prices. As is customary in the evening of this the last fair of the year, a ball was held at the Crown Inn. Music of “brassy” description was played, and the company tripped it merrily for several hours. Host Davies was as usual very obliging.

“Merthyr Express” 7 October 1871

Sad Accident at Vochriw On Tuesday, an accident occurred at the Deep Pit, Vochriw, by which a collier named George Davies, living at Brecon-road, Merthyr, met his death in a fearful manner. It appears that the deceased was engaged in placing props beneath “top,” and had nearly completed his task, when the timber gave way and a huge mass of coal estimated at 60 tons, fell upon him. The accident was observed by some of his comrades, who immediately set to work to recover the body, as they well knew that death must have been instantaneous, but it was some time before they succeeded in their endeavours. Deceased was 29 years of age, and was an affectionate husband and tender father. Great sympathy has been manifested by a large number of acquaintances towards his young widow and orphans.

“Merthyr Express” 21 October 1871

Gellygaer School Board An adjourned meeting of the Board was held at the Reading Room, Pontlottyn, when the following were present: Mr. J. Rees, vice-chairman, (in the chair); Revs. Aaron Davies, J.P. Williams and Mr. J. Lewis. With regard to the new school site at Vochriw, it was proposed by the Rev. A. Davies, seconded by the Rev. J.P. Williams, and carried, “that the vice-chairman wait upon Mrs. Williams, the owner of the land, and negotiate with her for the ground.”

“Merthyr Express” 25 November 1871

Presentation to Rev. T. Theophilus On Tuesday week, a very interesting meeting was held at the National School, Vochriw, for the purpose of presenting a testimonial of respect to Rev. T. Theophilus, who has been but a short time curate in charge of the place, and who is about leaving for a similar capacity at Blackwood. The chair was taken by the Rev. J. Hughes, vicar of Pontlottyn. He called upon Mr. Harris to speak. The substance of his address was the great respect and love of which the reverend gentleman was held by the inhabitants of Vochriw generally. Mr. Turner, surgeon of Pontlottyn, next presented Mr. Theophilus with a purse containing £11. Mrs. Turner presented the tea and coffee service, after which Mr. William Rees of Vochriw, presented Mrs. Theophilus with a pair of silver candlesticks. Each present was accompanied by a short address, highly eulogistic to the reverend gentleman and his excellent lady. In reply, the Rev. T. Theophilus said: “I can assure you that the numerous kindnesses that I have received since the day of my coming amongst you to the very day I leave, are quite sufficient to leave in my mind a lasting recollection of the inhabitants of Vochriw. That memory would, however, have perished with myself, but these handsome presents of yours will, when you and I have been laid down under the green sod, serve to recall to the mind of someone or other to whom they will have been left, the existence in times gone by of a valuable affection on the

part of the inhabitants of Vochriw towards a very humble member of the Church of England. It is gratifying for me to learn from you tonight that the non-conformist ministers of the neighbourhood, including their members, have cheerfully subscribed towards this substantial token of regard. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for this handsome token of your affection, and I only hope you will not measure the depth of my gratitude by my feeling words. My wife wishes me to express her thanks to you for having thought her humble service in connection with the harmonium and choir. It must have been very gratifying to Mr. Hames, choir master, as well as every member of the choir, that so eminent a musician as "Eos Llechyd" should have made such an honourable mention of the Vochriw choir in connection with the late church testimonial at Llandaff. The reverend gentleman resumed his seat amidst hearty applause. The proceedings were enlivened at intervals by some very excellent song given by Mrs. Harris and Mr. T. Hoskins. A vote of thanks to the chairman, and the singing of the National Anthem brought the proceedings to a close. The articles presented were supplied by Mr. J.D. Williams, jeweller, Merthyr. After the meeting, Mr. Theophilus and a few friends partook of an excellent supper provided by Mr. David Morgan, Rising Sun Inn, Vochriw.

Gellygaer School Board The ordinary monthly meeting was held on Friday last, at the Reading Room, Pontlottyn, when there were present Messrs. G. Martin, chairman, J. Rees, vice-chairman, R. Laybourne, James Lewis, and the Revs. Aaron Davies and J.P. Williams. The Clerk called attention to some correspondence from the owners of land selected as a site for the new school at Vochriw, and also, to an offer of land by the Dowlais Iron Company. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed to leave the matter in the hands of the Building Committee, who would visit both sites on the 27th inst., and would report progress at the next meeting.

"Merthyr Express" 9 December 1871

Ivoritism The quarterly meeting of the Rhymney District of True Ivorites, St. David's Unity, was held on Monday last at the Mount Pleasant Inn, Vochriw. There was a full attendance of delegates representing 21 lodges, under the presidency of Mr. Thomas Hughes. There were also present Brothers John Fisher, secretary, and John Jenkins, Bute Arms, treasurer. An application was made to open two new lodges at Maesyccwmmmer, which was granted. There has been during the past quarter eight funerals, but notwithstanding the heavy drain on the funds, they are in a very flourishing state. The district now numbers upwards of 1,200 members, with district funds amounting to nearly £80.

"Merthyr Express" 23 December 1871

Gellygaer School Board The monthly meeting was held on Friday last at the Library, Pontlottyn. Vochriw Building Site The committee appointed in connection with a new school at Vochriw, presented a draft plan of the piece of ground selected. It is a piece of common ground near the Dowlais Iron Company's colliery, and they raise no objection to that land being used for that purpose. It was therefore resolved that the offer of the Dowlais Company be accepted with thanks, and that the Clerk write to Mr. Lewis, the Marquis of Bute's agent, to obtain a grant for the site from His Lordship.

"Merthyr Express" 24 February 1872

Gellygaer School Board The ordinary monthly meeting was held on Friday last at the Rising Sun Inn, Vochriw, when the members present were Messrs. G. Martin, chairman, J. Rees, vice-chairman, J. Lewis, and the Revs. G.C.F. Harries, J.P. Williams, and A. Davies. The Vochriw Site It was resolved that as soon as Lord

Bute's consent is obtained, that the following gentlemen make arrangements with the architect: Messrs. G. Martin, J. Lewis, and the Revs. J.P. Williams and A. Davies.

“Merthyr Express” 23 March 1872

Fatal Accident at Dowlais: Loss of Three Lives A shocking accident occurred on Tuesday last on one of the lines belonging to the Dowlais Company, running between their works and Vochriw. It appears that about 5.30 p.m. a coal train left Vochriw with a number of colliers in one truck, and three more in the tender, the truck containing the men being the next behind the tender. The train was proceeding along at the usual speed, when on rounding the curve, where there is also an incline, a stationary engine was seen on the line ahead. The distance was too short to stop the train, and a violent collision ensued, which threw some of the carriages off the rails, and completely blocked the line. The violence of the collision was so great that the buffers of the truck immediately behind the tender were forced through the tender instantaneously, crushing two of the occupants to death, and so injuring the third that he died the next day. Several of the trucks were more or less smashed, but strange to say, the men who were in the truck escaped with nothing more than a few slight blows and a severe shaking. An inquest was formally opened by Mr. Overton at the Dowlais Inn on Wednesday afternoon, and adjourned for a week. The names of the deceased are John Harris, overman, William Williams, collier, and William Francis, collier.

“Merthyr Express” 10 August 1872

Small-pox at Rhymney We regret to announce that this sad disease has again made its appearance here. Two deaths have occurred this week, and there are several cases throughout the place.

“Merthyr Express” 31 August 1872

Stealing Coal Mary Smith, 19, was charged with stealing coal, weight 30 pounds, the property of the Dowlais Iron Company. P.C. James Davies said he saw prisoner taking coal from the Dowlais Company's railway line at Vochriw on Thursday evening; he followed and took her in charge, when it was found that she had 30lbs. weight, coal that had fallen from the overloaded trucks. Prisoner said she did not know there was any harm in it, and her mother, who was in Court, stated that she rented a cottage from Mr. Dixon, who had given her permission to pick up as much coal as she wanted, for her own use, from the tips. Mr. Jones, cashier of the Dowlais Company, said that Mr. Dixon was merely the contractor for constructing the Great Western Railway extension from Llancaiach to Dowlais, and had no right whatever to give permission to take coal from the Dowlais Company's line. Prisoner was sent for seven days hard labour.

Rhymney Strike All the girls employed at the Coal Pit Banks, and in unloading coal at the forges and mills of the works, about 120 in number, have struck work for an advance of wages to an extent of about 50%. Their present general rate is 7s. 6d. per week, while their demand is 12 shillings. Two large pits are now stopped due to the strike. A number of labourers have been temporarily employed in their stead to keep the works in action. The police are obliged to guard them while engaged in their duties.

“Merthyr Express” 7 September 1872

Waun Fair The usual Waun Fair was held on Monday, when there was a good attendance of buyers and sellers. There was a limited supply of cattle, which reached £16 to £18 each. There were no cows or calves for sale. Ewes 20 shillings to 26 shillings, and draught horses from £20 to £50. Mountain ponies reached from £7-

£14, and from £20-£35 respectively. There was a plentiful supply of pigs sold at usual prices.

Shocking Accident at Vochriw A dreadful accident happened on the Brecon and Merthyr Railway, at Vochriw, on Wednesday evening. A coal train was shunting, when the guard, John Williams, took an iron bar to spragg the wheels of a truck as the train was moving too fast. In doing this, the bar struck him violently throwing him across the rail. The unfortunate man was so fearfully mutilated that he died about six hours afterwards. Deceased was a single young man.

“Merthyr Express” 21 September 1872

Merthyr Police Court: The Vochriw Public House Case Mr. de Rutzen, Stipendiary, intimated that having looked carefully through the evidence, he should be prepared, if Mr. Simmons (for the defence) would permit to a conviction, without going further into the case, to deal leniently in the matter. After consulting with his client, Mr. Simmons consented to this course as there were one or two circumstances which were difficult to meet, and there might have been a slight infringement of the law. Defendant was fined 20 shillings and costs.

“Merthyr Express” 11 January 1873

The Strike: Rhymney The all-absorbing topic here at present is the great strike. All the colliers and firemen are out for a second week. The furnaces are at half blast, and a few tradesmen remain at work. Unless something is settled soon, all will be at a standstill.

The Great Strike at the Iron Works: The Situation The great strike which now exists at all the seats of the Iron industry in South Wales may be said to have commenced last Thursday, when it was concurrently resolved at the colliers meeting at the Drill Hall of this town, and at a delegate meeting held at the same time at the Lord Ragland, to resist the notice and bearing the tools out of the pits. No work has been done by nine-tenths of the men since last Saturday week, but it was only on Thursday that the final resolution to strike was taken. The result is that the whole of the large iron works in the two counties of Glamorgan and Monmouth is closed, and the men and boys at home doing nothing, or running through the County in search of work. There never has been such a conflict in the Principality on such a tremendous scale as at present. There have been strikes and lock-outs, but chiefly limited to one or two works at a time, and generally in the same town. But the struggle now begun embraces every large establishment in South Wales, from Blaenavon on the east to Cwmavon on the west. It is gigantic in its dimensions. The total number of hands employed in the collieries and at the iron works is estimated at 70,000, but after allowing for the most liberal deductions, not less than 60,000 will be affected by the untoward movement. Of the numbers, rather more than one third is in this town of Merthyr. The Dowlais works alone give employment to about 11,000 persons; Cyfarthfa about 5,000; and Plymouth about 5,000; and the amount paid weekly in wages rather exceeds rather than falls short of £20,000, of which one half is paid at the Dowlais office. The situation at present is most discouraging. Both sides manifest the greatest firmness in their determination not to yield. The workmen meet frequently to discuss their position, and neither colliers nor iron workers evince the slightest inclination to abandon their demand for a court of arbitration or an unconditional withdrawal of the notice. The colliers are confident in the power of their organization to sustain them. The Iron workers have, however, no Union, and how they are going to abide the contest we do not know, and neither do they appear to know themselves. But they are not the less resolute, if we may be guided by the

tone of their meeting, in their determination not to go to work at a reduction of wages.

“Merthyr Express” 8 February 1873

Severe Snowstorm On Saturday night a snowstorm began which for severity exceeded anything of its kind within the experience of any of the residents of Merthyr for many years past. The wind blew fiercely, furiously, and with a coldness which made it really a biting blast. The snow fell in such minute particles that they found ingress through the smallest openings into dwelling houses; keyholes were comparatively big ports, whilst every little crevice admitted the sleet in such quantities that when Sunday morning came people found heaps of snow all over their houses, and in the most unexpected places. The storm continued without abatement all day Sunday, and the drift was in places six or even ten feet deep. As a matter of course, these drifts totally obstructed the roads where they occurred. The railways were kept open to traffic with difficulty, but fortunately, no local train was thoroughly snowed under. On the Ebbw Vale branch of the Merthyr and Abergavenny line, the snow drifted to a height that over-topped the back of the locomotive, and on the Brecon and Merthyr line between Pengam and Rhymney a train was buried in a deep drift.

Gelligaer School Board The ordinary monthly meeting was held on Thursday. A letter was read from Messrs Luard & Shirley, agents to the Marquis of Bute, offering a piece of common land for the building of a school at Fochriw for £50. It was proposed by the Rev. A. Davies, and seconded by Mr. J. Lewis, that the offer be accepted, and that a cheque be made up and forwarded forthwith. This was agreed.

The Great Strike: Second Arrival of Strike Pay A second installment of strike pay arrived on Friday last and amounted to between £7,000 and £8,000. All the “in benefit” members of the colliers union received the full allowance.

Train timetable Trains up to Dowlais leave Fochriw at 09.10; 2.05; 6.55; trains down to Deri, leave Fochriw at 10.00; 3.15; 6.16

“Merthyr Express” 8 March 1873

The Great Strike The great strike is over. Work will begin on Monday.

“Merthyr Express” 26 April 1873

Rural Sanitary Board A Meeting of the Rural Sanitary Board for the Merthyr Union for the parishes of Gelligaer, Vaynor, Penderyn and Rhigos was held on Saturday. Dr. Redwood’s report for Gelligaer was not forthcoming.

“Merthyr Express” 26 July 1873

Gelligaer School Board The contract for the building of the Fochriw Board School has been signed. A request from Mr. Thomas Jones for permission to build next to the school was refused.

“Merthyr Express” 16 August 1873

Laying Of Memorial Stones For The Primitive Methodist Chapel At Fochriw The ceremony of laying the memorial stones for the new Primitive Methodist Chapel at Fochriw took place on Monday 11th August. Seven years ago, the Primitives began English speaking services at this place and have continued to do so in a small inconvenient dwelling room. Because of increasing demand for houses, they moved into the open air. Because of the coming winter, the Rev. J. Dinnick has entered into responsibilities of over £165 so as to accommodate over 100 persons. The building will be neat and substantial. It was commenced in faith because there were only eight regular members, working people, who had paid towards the undertaking £6.3s. The services of Monday were as follows: Mrs. W. L. Daniel of Merthyr laid the first memorial stone with her name inscribed upon it and placed thereon a cheque for £5

for herself and friends. Then eight purses were laid on the stone - Mrs. Norman £2-2-6, Mrs. Peadon £2, Mr. & Mrs. Brice £2-2-6, Mr. Worman £1-10-0, Simeon Worman £1-3-0, James Brice £1, James & Ann Glanville £1-16-0. The Rev. Dinnick placed on stones contributions from: G. T. Clark Esq. £5; Mrs. Williams, Vaynor £3; Mrs. Phillips, Fochriw £2-10-0; Mr. J. Davies £2-2-6; D. E. Williams Esq., Hirwaun £2-2-0; T. Williams Esq., Goitre £1; Mr. J. D. Williams, jeweller £1-1-0; Mr. Morgan the Rising Sun, £1; Mr. Jones, Caeglas, £1 and several sums under one pound. The Rev. J. P. Bellingham, author of "Entomology & Christianity" spoke ably on the day we live in. He gave an exposition of the rise and progress of the Connexion. The Rev. J. Dinnick presented Mrs. Daniel and Mrs. Thomas with two bound histories of the Connexion. The Rev. D. Jones, B.A., Merthyr, spoke in Welsh and English, and Rev. J. Griffith spoke in Welsh. Then 150 friends took tea. Mrs. Morgan Thomas laid the other memorial stone with her name on it and gave a sovereign to the chapel funds with a promise of more at the opening. The services were brought to a close and the total amount promised and given amounts to £50-7-7. The workmen engaged on the building were supplied with cake and tea on Tuesday morning.

"Merthyr Express" 6 September 1873

The Ivorites The Ivorites held their annual feast at the Mount Pleasant Inn Fochriw on Saturday last.

Good Templars The Good Templars Order, with branches from Fochriw, Pontlottyn and Twyn Caro have paraded the streets of Rhymney led by the Good Templars Drum and Fife Band.

"Merthyr Express" 18 October 1873

Gelligaer School Board. The salary of the Master at Fochriw School is to be raised to £60 and that of the serving mistress to £10. The Rev. G.C.F. Harries complaining that school pence was not properly collected and therefore sought to amend these salaries to £55 and £10.

"Merthyr Express" 16 May 1874

Waun Fair The usual fair was held on Wednesday. There was an abundant supply of cattle but there were no buyers. We are informed that there has not been such a poor fair for some time.

Juvenile Emigrants A group of little girls from the Workhouse attended before Mr. de Retzen at the Police Court on Wednesday to receive His Worships sanction prior to leaving for Canada. Mr. de Rutzen spoke very kindly to them, and told them they would be accompanied by a lady (Miss Rye) who would take care of them. They all seemed to be much pleased.

"Merthyr Express" 23 May 1874

The Railway Accident A railway crash occurred at Merthyr Station on Saturday afternoon, 16th May, at 3p.m. A train of 25 laden coal wagons with two locomotives in front collided with a passenger train standing at Merthyr Station. Fifty five people were injured. One woman died the following week.

"Merthyr Express" 4 July 1874

Farewell Meeting The Rev. J. Dinnick who has been in charge of the Primitive Methodist Mission in Merthyr and district for the past three years is leaving for Dover. A special service will take place in the Temperance Hall on Sunday and there will be a farewell meeting on Monday.

"Merthyr Express" 15 August 1874

Frightful Disaster to a Runaway Train at Bargoed Junction On Wednesday, one of the most terrible and destructive collisions ever known in this area occurred outside Bargoed Junction Station, on the Rhymney Railway. The Station is the point of

junction between the Rhymney and the northern section of the Brecon and Merthyr Railways. The line of the latter enters here the narrow gorge of the Rhymney-Bargoed valley, and by curves of short radii and gradients of 1:40 and even 1:38 ascends the side of the mountain through Deri and Vochriw, and so on to Dowlais Top. It is a single line, and the Rhymney Railway Company enjoy running powers over it as far as Dowlais. On Wednesday morning, a train of 40 ten-ton wagons laden with coal left the siding of the Dowlais Company's Vochriw Colliery for Cardiff. It was drawn by one of the heavy and powerful new tank locomotives of the Rhymney Company, constructed especially for sharp curves and gradients, and had the usual brake-van at the rear. The driver was Joshua Forcey, and the fireman Joseph Hayman, both of Cardiff. The brakesman, John Reid, was on the train about half a dozen trucks behind the engine, and the guard, William Stockings, was about the same distance from the rear, both being on the train for the purpose of putting down the brakes. Most of the trucks were new and the brakes in good condition. The atmosphere, however, was moist, and the rain came on which made the rails greasy. The train proceeded safely from Vochriw to the Deri Station, and when it passed through that place there were 37 brakes down. But it is here that the steepest gradients begin, and in descending these, the train acquired a speed that increased at such a rate that it was clear that the engine had lost control. The driver commenced sounding the brake whistle and kept it going. The engine was reversed and every effort made to arrest the progress of the train without the slightest success. It seems that only the enormous weight of the train could have kept it on the rails. The alarm whistle was heard at Bargoed, but the runaway was quickly at the Junction and collided with an engine and trucks standing at a watering tank, before both engines, trucks and their contents rolled over the embankment into the ravine 50 feet below in a mass of indescribable confusion and destruction. The driver and fireman of the runaway were killed.

“Merthyr Express” 29 August 1874

Gelligaer School Board Rev. J. P. Williams moved the engagement of a female ex-pupil teacher at Fochriw Board School, and this was passed. The day for the opening of the new Fochriw Board School was postponed to 3rd September 1874 when Messrs. G. T. Clark, Dowlais, G. Martin, C. H. James, Merthyr & others will be present.

“Merthyr Express” 12 September 1874

The Gelligaer Schools: Meeting of the New Governing Body The first meeting of the Governors of the Gelligaer Educational Charity, under the scheme of the Endowed Schools Commissions, was held on Tuesday at the schools, Pengam. The new governing body consists of ten members, five of them co-optative and five elective. Of the former, consisting of the Ven. Archdeacon Blossie, Mr. G. T. Clark, Mr. Charles H. James, Mr. Samuel Homfray, and Mr. G. G. Thomas, all with the exception of Mr. C. H. James, were trustees under the old regime, the later gentleman owing his position to the wish expressed by a large number of the Dissenters in the parish to have his name or that of Capt. E. D. Williams (Maesyruddud) among the co-optative governors; but it was found out that the last named gentleman was a lessee of the coal under the Charity, and consequently ineligible. The whole of the new governors were present on this occasion. Their names are as follows: The Venerable Archdeacon Blossie, the Rev. Aaron Davies, the Rev. Richard Williams, Messrs. G. T. Clark, Samuel Homfray, G. W. G. Thomas, Chas. H. James, Ed. D. Williams, Lewis D. Rees, and Daniel Seys Lewis. The Rev. Archdeacon Blossie was appointed to the chair for the transaction of preliminary

business. It was then proposed by the Rev. Aaron Davies, and seconded by Mr. C. H. James, that Mr. G. T. Clark be appointed chairman for the ensuing year. This was carried unanimously. It was proposed by the Rev. Richard Williams, and by Mr. D. Seys Lewis, that Mr. C. H. James be appointed vice-chairman for the year. Mr. Frank James, Merthyr, was appointed Clerk, and Mr. Thomas Jones Evans of the Brecon Old Bank, Merthyr, was appointed Treasurer. The master of the schools at Pengam, Mr. A. T. Pullin, gave a full report on the present state of the schools.

School Boards In Glamorgan From a Parliamentary return made up to June last, and just issued, we learn the following particulars as to the cost of School Boards in Glamorganshire, in their various particulars. At the date of the return there appear to be 19 Boards already established. Gelligaer - Cost of first election £9 4s.; cost of second (first triennial) election, £33 14s. 6d.; cost of establishment, £294 12s. 3d.; cost of erection of schools, £4,355 14s. 7d.; cost of maintenance of schools, £1,302 15s. 4d.; other expenses, £114 17s. 3½d.; total expenditure, £6,110 17s. 10 ½d.; rateable value of the district, £70,213; gross amount for which precepts have been issued, £1,600; annual amount per £ in rateable value, 1s. 7d. Merthyr Tydfil - Cost of erection of schools, £7,819 18s. 3d.; cost of maintenance of schools £3,408 [?] 17s. 4d.; total expenditure, £12,704 12s. 1d.; rateable value of the district, £135,527 12s. 6d.; annual amount per £ in rateable value, 2s. 6d.

“Merthyr Express” 17 October 1874

Gelligaer Endowed Schools At the second meeting of the new governing body, Mr. Frank James applied on behalf of the Highway Board, for permission of the governors for the formation of a road from Deri to Bargoed. He explained that although there was a railway between the two places, there was no road.

Gelligaer School Board The ordinary meeting of the Board was held on Thursday afternoon, the 8th instant, at the Board room, Pontlottyn schools, when there were present - the Revs. A. Davies (chairman), R. Williams, J. Griffiths, and J. P. Williams, and Mr. Matthews. Mr. J. Davies acted as deputy clerk. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Lack of Duty Arising out of the minutes passed at the previous meeting, it appears that a committee had been appointed to ascertain the general rate of pay given to pupil teachers of the schools in the neighbouring district; but the committee had neglected its work, and had not yet met. Rev. J. P. Williams was entrusted with the duty of convening the committee.

Current Expenditure The Clerk had prepared and sent in an estimate of the aggregate expenditure the Board would require for the next six months, the various items amounting to £1,405. The Clerk was instructed to declare a precept for the sum required to meet the necessary expenditure of the Board.

Loan of The Deri Board School On behalf of the inhabitants of the locality, the Rev. J. E. Griffiths made an application to the Board for the use of the Deri school for the convenience of the practice of a brass band which was now starting in the place. This was granted, on condition of the payment of a sum of 10s., exclusive of cleaning, and the proper arrangement of the school furniture.

“Merthyr Express” 24 October 1874

Gellygaer Rural Sanitary Board A meeting of the Board took place on Friday, at the boardroom of the Gellygaer Board Schools, Pontlottyn, when there were present Messrs. J. Matthews (in the chair), D. Morgan (Pontlottyn), E. Lewis (Ysgwyddgwyn), T. D. Rees (Hengoed), W. Matthews (Vochriw); and the Revs. J. P. Williams and A. Davies (Pontlottyn). The minutes of the former meeting were read and confirmed, and the report of the Sanitary Inspector was also read and passed.

Privy Accommodation After some discussion of this important subject, a deficiency of which exist in various parts of the parish, it was unanimously resolved that the inspector should serve a notice on Mr. Edmund Lewis, Glanaber, Pontllanfraith, who had not complied with a previous notice of the Board to provide privy accommodation in connection with houses in Bailey-street, Deri, of which he is possessor, within a week, or to be summoned for such neglect before the magistrates. A bill of £40 from Mr. Thomas, ironmonger, for numbers supplied to doors, and for the nomenclature of a certain number of streets in various localities of the parish, was ordered to be paid, subject to the discount of the usual amount. The same committee was appointed to inspect the work of naming the different streets and numbering the house doors. Dr. Dyke, who is the medical officer for the district, called the attention of the Board to the filthy conditions of the closets attached to the Newton Board School and is really a nuisance in the locality. The Rev. A. Davies said that the school had only recently been transferred to the control of the Gellygaer School Board. It being formerly a national school, under the management of the Rev. G.O.F. Harris, rector of Gellygaer, and the Rev. T. Theophilus, vicar of Pontlottyn. As a great deal of alterations and additions to the school are about to be made, the Gellygaer School Board are determined to proceed at once with the subject entrusted to them, and attention will be paid to the medical officer's complaint with the view of removing the nuisance. The Board also gave an order for the supply of a number of proper and convenient ash-pits to be erected at Bute Town and Bute-terrace. Notice was also given to Mr. Thos. Morgan, butcher, Chapel-street, Pontlottyn, to discontinue the nuisance emanating from a stable which is rented by him in that street.

Water Supply for Fochriw A discussion of this important question occupied a considerable amount of time by the Board. At a previous meeting of the board the question of supplying water to the inhabitants of this rapidly increasing locality had been minutely dealt with, and it has been decided that it should be furnished, but a feasible scheme for carrying the object into effect has not yet been laid before them. To avoid a large expenditure to the rates, it was suggested that an application be made to the Dowlais Iron Company to enlarge the reservoir that they have for the use of their pits in the district, whereby a sufficient quantity could be accumulated, in conjunction therewith, the Board to provide the requisite number of filter beds. The suggestion was not unanimously approved of, but, nevertheless, a deputation was appointed to wait on Mr. G. Martin, the mineral agent, to lay before him the proposed suggestion, to ascertain conditions, and to report the result to the next Board meeting to be held at Tirphil.

“Merthyr Express” 14 November 1874

Gelligaer School Board The ordinary monthly meeting of the Board was held on Thursday last, when there were present the Revs. A. Davies (chairman), J. P. Williams and A. Williams, and Mr. Matthews.

School Attendance The attendance officer reported that Daniel Williams had not complied with the order of the Board to send his children to school; Isaac Richards had been sent to gaol for felony; and in the case of Sullivan, some of his children had been attacked with measles, and the Rev. A. P. Wilson had refused to admit them to school until they were totally cured, so as to prevent the other children of the school being likewise attacked. Several persons were again called before the Board to answer the reason why their children did not attend school, the first of whom was the guardian of Mary and Johanna Corbett, who, it was stated, had been deserted by their parents, who had gone to America. They were now under the guardianship of their

grandfather, and usually attended the Roman Catholic School. In such a case the chairman said that they could not pay towards the education of the children attending such schools, as they had decided not to pay the fees of other children only those who attended the Board schools. Mr. Matthews: Have you applied to the Board of Guardians? Attendance Officer: No; not for the school fees; but when they applied for poor relief they were ordered into the house. Mr. Matthews: I should not like others to come to this Board under similar circumstances.

Eliza Cornelius also appeared for the same cause, who, in compliance with the order of the officer, had sent two of her children to school, but that the other two did not go as they were without shoes, and living at the Gwrhyd; but as soon as she would be able to have shoes for them, they would be sent to school. Rev. R. Williams: When will that be? No reply. Rev. R. Williams: Will it be next week? Mrs. Cornelius: Don't know, sir. I shall try to do it. Mrs. Cornelius stated that her husband was employed as out-door fitter, at the Rhymney works: a class of men which are generally in receipt of good wages. Ultimately she promised to send her children to school.

Harriet Jones, a widow from Vochriw, was reported by the officer, and she appeared before the Board requesting the remission of school fees for three of her children attending the Vochriw Board School The attendance officer reported the amount of earnings received into the house, which was £1 13s. per week, and likewise the number of family which is eight. Rev. R. Williams to applicant: Will you assist the Board by paying for one of the children if the Board should agree to pay for the other two? Mrs. Jones: It will be very hard for me to do so. In reply to a question she stated that the eldest boy was occasionally ill, by which he lost a good deal of his time. Mr. Matthews: If the Board will pay the fees in this case we shall soon have half the parish to apply for the remission of school fees. Rev. J. P. Williams: We have nothing to go by in deciding the question of the remission of school fees but the plea of poverty of the parent or guardian in care of the children; and we have no right whatever to calculate on the earnings of brothers with the view to compel them to pay the school fees of their brothers and sisters. The Clerk said he had no doubt that Mr. Williams was legally right. The Chairman observed that whether he was legally right he did not know, but certainly he could not be morally so. Subsequently, the Rev. R. Williams proposed, and it was ultimately resolved, that the Board should pay the school fees of two of these children for two months; and the mother to pay for one of them.

Susan Llewellyn, another widow from Vochriw, applied for the remission of school fees for two of her children. The Attendance Officer, in stating the amount of income received into the house said that there were four lodgers; and that Llewellyn was in receipt of £1 10s. per quarter for cleaning the Vochriw school; and also a daughter was engaged in service at Hirwaun. The Rev. J. P. Williams said he disapproved of the conduct of raking up the earnings of a daughter at Hirwaun; if they are able to support themselves, it is quite sufficient for them without asking them to contribute to the education of the members of the family. I cannot approve of the behaviour of the Merthyr Board of Guardians in cases of this character, to be introduced and carried on in this Board. Clerk: They have carried that resolution by majority, Mr. Williams. Chairman: There is no harm in knowing such things. Mr. Matthews thought there was sufficient income coming into this house to enable them to pay the school fees of these children. The Rev. J. P. Williams did not see that she (Mrs. Llewellyn) deserved any assistance as in the other case, as although she had previously secured aid from the Board for the education of her children, she had been

brought before the Board for neglecting to send them to school. He would move, therefore, that the fees in this case be not remitted. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

Salary of Pupil Teachers The Chairman said that unfortunately no report on the general amount of salary paid to pupil teachers of the schools in the surrounding districts could be laid before the Board, as two attempts to hold a committee meeting had been made, but both were unsuccessful. The Rev. J. P. Williams said that they did not desire to meet, or else they could have done so. Rev. R. Williams: Supposing Mr. Williams, that you would place before the Board a scale which you think a sufficient remuneration. Mr. Matthews agreed to this suggestion on condition that the Rev. Mr. Williams would modify his terms of language. He (Mr. Matthews) was a member of the committee, and it was his desire to meet with the other members, but he was so far pressed with other business that he could not attend. Rev. J. P. Williams said they had intended to meet at one o'clock p.m. today, and he had actually gone over to the Vochriw for the purpose of regretting the attendance of Rev. J. E. Griffiths, who promised to do so, as did all to the Chairman; but neither of them put in an appearance. However, as a member of the committee, he had made enquiries, and would propose a scheme. He had found that at Merthyr they were in the habit of advancing more at the termination of the period than any other part of the year, the amount being advanced the last year to the extent of £5. He also had made enquiries of Pengam and Rhymney, where it was found they advanced the same amounts each year. As such he would propose the following rules of payment: To the boys for the first year, £10; 2nd £18; 3rd £16; 4th £20; and the last year, £24. To the girls he would propose: For the first year £8; 2nd £10 10s.; 3rd £18; 4th £16; last year, £10. Rev. R. Williams: What standard must children pass before they can be entered as pupil teachers? Rev. J. P. Williams: Reading and writing, together with the first four rules, and should be in the 5th standard geography, and grammar must be added. Rev. R. Williams: Have you children in the school at present qualified for that course? Yes; but our schools have only recently been opened. Rev. R. Williams observed that £10 per annum was a small stipend for boys at the age of 18. The Chairman remarked that an increase made in the respective years would be the means of inducing parents to keep their children as pupil teachers. Rev. R. Williams seconded the proposal of Rev. J. P. Williams as to the scale of payment [which was to apply from the current year].

Finances The Clerk read the abstract of the accounts for the past six months, from which it appeared that the total income amounted to the sum of £5,144 16s. 9d., and the expenditure to the sum of £4,116 10s. 6d. It was unanimously resolved that the foregoing abstract be advertised in the "Merthyr Express."

"Merthyr Express" 28 November 1874

Gelligaer Urban Sanitary Board A meeting was held at the Dynevor Hotel, Tir Phil, on Friday last when the following members were present: Mr. J. Matthews, (chairman), Messrs. D. Morgan and W. Mathews, and the Revds. J. F. Williams and A. Davies, Pontlottyn, and J. E. Griffiths, Vochriw.

Vochriw and Cwmfelin Water Supply The inhabitants of these fast-increasing localities must still be held in suspense as to when they shall be supplied with pure and healthy water for domestic purposes. At the previous meeting of the Board, a committee of the members was appointed, and in the interim duly notified by the inspector to meet at Cwmfelin, but it appears that not sufficient interest has been felt by them respecting this important question, as when requested to meet, all of the

members failed to put in an appearance, and consequently no progress has been made by the Board in this direction.

“Merthyr Express” 12 December 1874

Anniversary On Sunday and Monday last, the anniversary services connected with the Nazareth Congregational Chapel of this place were held, when most impressive and eloquent sermons were delivered for the occasion by the Revs. D. Thomas, Llangynidr; W. G. Williams, Rhymney; J. E. Griffiths, Vochriw; and T. Rees, D.D., Swansea. The Revs. J. R. Davies, New Tredegar; R. Herbert (C.M.); J. P. Williams, Baptist, Pontlottyn; D. S. Evans and W. Griffiths, Rhymney; and Mr. J. John, Sirhowy, were also present, and took part in the introductory services. At the conclusion of each service, liberal collections were made towards the liquidation of the chapel debt, the handsome sum of upwards of £60 having been realised on this occasion. We are gratified to learn that the church and congregation assembled in this chapel under the ministry of the Rev. J. R. Williams, are at present in a progressive and satisfactory condition; and strenuous efforts are constantly being made to remove the burthen of debt now remaining on the chapel.

Storm Throughout the whole of Tuesday a most violent storm of winds, accompanied by incessant heavy rain, visited the district. The wind blew most violently from a south-westerly direction, and was so powerful at intervals that it shook the houses, but with the exception of a few slates being blown down from the roofs, and a great swelling of the river, together with some flooded streets, we are glad to record that no serious damage had been done to either person or property.

Gelligaer School Board The ordinary monthly meeting of the Board was held on Thursday week at the Boardroom, Pontlottyn, when the following members were present: Revs. A. Davies (chairman); J. P. Williams and J. E. Griffiths; and Messrs. D. Morgan and J. Matthews; J. Davies deputy clerk; J. D. Jones attendance officer; and J. Williams architect.

Irregular Attendance The subject of irregular attendance at school was introduced, and Mrs. Williams of Brithdir appeared before the Board to answer for the irregular attendance of her children at school. David Castor, the parent of one child, Jonah Merchant, the father of two children, and John Harris of Pontlottyn, who neglected to send a child to his school, were also ordered to appear before the Board, but did not, all three of whom had sent word promising to send their children to school in future, as also did Mrs. Williams of Brithdir, and in case such a promise should not be complied with, all the parties will be summoned forthwith.

Attendance And Payment Of School Fees The following monthly report of the attendance officer was read:

Name of School	Vochriw	Deri	Pontlottyn Boys	Pontlottyn Girls
Av'ge no. present per week	138	98.6	69.3	78.9
Number on register	180	129	89	116
School fees received	£4-15-5	£3-15-8	£2-10-7½	£2-0-10
School pence in arrears	£3-14-11	£5-5-6	£2-5-7½	£4-8-4

[Also Data for Troedyfuwch, Bargoed mixed, Bargoed infants, Pontlottyn infants, New Town]

“Merthyr Express” 19 December 1874

Carmel Chapel On Sunday last anniversary services were held in the chapel, when the Rev. D. H. Rees of Bathania, Dowlais, preached eloquent and powerful sermons. All the services were very numerously attended, and liberal collections towards the chapel funds were made at the conclusion. The Rev. J. E. Griffiths, minister, and

other reverend gentlemen were present, and took part in the introductory portion of the meetings.